SUAREZ AND VIZCAYA: AN ITALIAN GARDEN IN A SUB-TROPICAL PARADISE

By

MARGARITA BLANCO

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To Enrique

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

DASP	Design-as-a-social-process is the theory being discussed in this study.
NYT	New York Times
VMGA	Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives
Accademia	Refers specifically to the Accademia de Belli Arti di Firenze (Florence Academy of Art)
Aesthete	A person who holds a dear appreciation of art and beauty
Aspirant	A person with ambitions to achieve something, typically to follow a particular career.
Atelier	From French meaning a workshop or studio, especially one used by an artist or designer.
Beaux Arts	French meaning Fine Arts.
Bosco	From Italian meaning woods or forest.
Captains of Industry	Refers to compassionate men who used their wealth and influence in a positive way making important contributions to the nation and to improve the lives of the American people.
Concours	From French meaning a contest or architectural competition.
Conquistador	A Spanish person who travelled to America in the 16th century and took control of the land.
Corpus delicatus	In Latin meaning the entire works of an author.
Culture	Should be understood as the entire "way of life" of a society.
Ecôle	Refers specifically to the Ecôle des Beaux Arts in Paris, France.
Graffito	Italian meaning an ancient drawing or writing scratched on a wall or other surface.
Green man	A sculpture of a face surrounded by foliage.
Haciendas	The Spanish scholar Maricruz Aguilar Garcia defined the haciendas as “*a specific type of architecture linked to the surrounding natural landscape and to a system of agricultural*

	exploitation.' (Garcia, 1988).In Spanish-speaking countries the term refers to a large estate or plantation with a dwelling house.
Hispanic	People of Spanish speaking Latin American countries. The term does not consider indigenous cultures, prioritizing the dominant European cultures.
Italian Garden	For the purposes of this study, I will use the term 'Italian Garden' as defined by R.W. Davidson (1989) for all gardens designed in the Italian manner, including those in the USA. The word 'Italianate' is avoided believing that its implications are inappropriate to the garden of Vizcaya because it denotes either a garden which partakes of the form of the Italian model but not its principles; or one that does not even resemble the form of the prototype, but that maintains nominal connection to it. In addition, the use of the term 'Italianate' widens the gap between our present understanding of these gardens and that of their owners and builders, who overwhelmingly referred to them as 'Italian'.
Kasbah	The name given to a pavillion designed by Diego Suarez on the grounds of Villa Vizcaya which is decorated with North African tiles.
Latino	People of Latin American origin.
Lemonaia	Italian meaning a lemon house or garden where lemons and other citrus are cultivated.
Loggia	Italian meaning a gallery that forms part of a house and has one side or more open to the garden.
Mestizo	A Latin American person of mixed American Indian and Spanish European descent.
Parterre de broderie	French meaning a type of ornamental garden that evolved in France in the late 16th century and is characterized by the division of paths and beds to form an embroidery-like pattern. The patterns were flowing ribbons of form (generally of formalized foliate design) rather than the angular shapes typical of the Italian types of parterre; and the various beds into which the parterre was divided by paths were coordinated in a single symmetrical design.
Parterre d'eau	French meaning an ornamental garden with paths between water beds instead of plants.

Playboy	A man who lives his life devoted to the pursuit of pleasure.
Plaza Mayor	Spanish meaning the main square in a town or city.
Quinta	In Spain, Portugal, and Latin America means a large house in the country or on the outskirts of a town.
Rigueur	From French meaning prescribed or required by fashion, etiquette, or custom.
Social Process	Is a concept that explores how we interpret and define our social reality based on interactions with others and how we assign meanings to things and places based on our association of them through connections in our minds.
Teatrino	Italian for small theater.
Translation	The arrival and use of foreign models in America with reference to American landscape architecture, namely the results and not their inspirations.
Villa	The Italian name given to projects conceived in a coherent design in which the architecture and the landscape are conceived to be one composition.
Vizcaya	James Deering’s estate in Miami, Florida. Also known as Villa Vizcaya, Dade County Museum and Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

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By

Margarita Blanco

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A survey of influential designers in American landscape architecture reveals considerable Anglo-Saxon cultural representation, but the historic contributions of Hispanics include few individual references. Yet one of the most significant landscape design projects, the estate grounds and gardens of Villa Vizcaya, in Miami, Florida, was designed by a little-known Colombian landscape architect, Diego Suarez. This project investigates the cultural and heritage influences of this Colombian-born, Italian-trained landscape architect. It interprets his upbringing, education, and training, leading to his most significant commission, Villa Vizcaya, a project that represents an important contribution to 20th century landscape architectural design and practice in the United States.

This study employs socio-cultural approaches that frame design as an embodiment of the cultural perspective of the designer as it intersects historical trends to produce designs that become landmarks of a particular time and place. This project fills a gap in our understanding of an important Hispanic contribution to the development of American landscape architectural theory and practice.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The discipline we now know as Landscape Architecture came about in the early 20th century when rapid industrial, economic and socio-cultural changes set the stage for this artistic movement. Wealthy Americans sought to display their new status by importing classical European landscape designs, the likes of which include Villa Vizcaya in Miami, Florida. According to The Cultural Landscape Foundation, "*Vizcaya's gardens are amongst the best examples of Italianate gardens in the United States and are unmatched in this hemisphere for their grandeur and carefully studied historical authenticity."* [1]

There is far deeper significance to the gardens than their surface beauty and longevity. In 1914 when James Deering commissioned Diego Suarez to design the Italian Garden for his estate, Villa Vizcaya, the project would become the only Italian garden in a sub-tropical climate built to date.[2] Vizcaya and its gardens reflect and express the context in which they were created: a historically unique marriage of European classic formality and American capitalist enthusiasm that reveals a great deal about the values and lifestyle of the wealthiest strata of American society, including the tendency of the social elite, such as James Deering, to look to European aesthetics for guidance and validation.[3]

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[1] Cultural Landscape Foundation, www.tclf.org.Retrieved 2013.

[2] www.vizcaya.org / Vizcaya Museum and Gardens / James Deering Files.

[3] Dow, Joy Wheeler. 1904, American Renaissance:A Review of Domestic Architecture, New York. p.19,167.

Despite its unique position, the landscape literature about Vizcaya does not fully acknowledge the contribution of its principal landscape architect, Diego Suarez. As the only known Italian garden built in the sub-tropical United States,[4] Vizcaya embodies a singular dialogue between the natural landscape of south Florida and the design ideals of its principal landscape architect. It is through a series of odd coincidences and pure chance that Suarez came to be responsible for the Master Plan and landscape design at Vizcaya. One of the fascinating aspects of Suarez's story is how little known he is, despite his major contribution to an important aspect of the history of American landscape architecture. Indeed, that he is known at all is the result of yet another unlikely tale, as for decades he was all but erased from the commonly told story of Vizcaya's development. Suarez's inter-continental design activities have never been a subject of inquiry. Previous scholars have concentrated on his work at Vizcaya, without delving into his role in American landscape history. The story of the gardens has much to tell us about the development of landscape architectural practice in the United states during the 20th century, its Hispanic and European influences, and of Diego Suarez himself.

The Argument for Interpreting Suarez

Suarez produced no conventional textual account of his ideas.[5] There is virtually no archive of his work except for the limited number of drawings and letters in the

[4] As of the date of publication, research conducted at the Smithsonian Institution archives in Washington D.C. shows that Vizcaya is in fact the only formal Italian garden in a sub-tropical climate in the world.

[5] The only known account to date is a 7-page type written statement of fact that Suarez wrote in 1953 where he tells the story of his involvement in the Vizcaya project and enumerates his sources of inspiration. For statement of fact see also letter from Suarez to Mrs. Richard Sears Berry, dated November 12, 1957, p.2, where Suarez affirms that "In the summary which I wrote for The New York Times, on behalf of my old friend Francis Burrall Hoffman, as an answer to the unfair Loucheim article, I

archives of the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.[6] Since Suarez produced no written text of his own regarding his built work,[7] it has been left to others to frame and interpret his work based on his built works and recorded statements he made later in his life. To begin to comprehend the varied cultural and social forces that affected Suarez and his design for Vizcaya's gardens, it is first necessary to situate the topic within the Vizcaya literature.

Two critical dates must be taken into consideration when assessing either Suarez's work or the literature relating to his life and work: 1917 and 1953. The first of these, the year he left the Vizcaya project, represents an important benchmark because it is also the year that he was denied authorship of his work.[8] The latter date, 1953, is the year of the publication of a *New York Times* article titled “Biscayne Bay’s New Showplace”, arguably the single most important publication about Suarez' work, published to coincide with the transformation of the Villa Vizcaya from private hands to public ownership as the new Dade County Art Museum.[9]

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stated all the particulars and facts of the case”. An analysis of why so much information is missing from Suarez's works is discussed in Appendix A.

[6] Vizcaya conserves the bulk of drawings done for the project and some correspondence with Suarez in the 1960's and first half of 1970's.

[7] As per Suarez’s own account, he wrote the article about the Vizcaya garden for Architectural Review in 1917 – he was also interviewed by Henry Hope Reed and others after 1953. For more on Suarez' claim of authorship about the Architectural Review article see Letter from Suarez to Mrs. Robert J. Bohne dated April 5,1959 and letter from Suarez to Mrs. Richard S. Berry dated February 6, 1959. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives. Suarez File.

[8] Full account of the controversy is detailed in Appendix A of this dissertation.

[9] Details of this ownership transfer are discussed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

At the time of the publication of the New York Times article on March 15th in 1953,[10] the literature on Suarez consisted of several articles critiquing his designs for residential buildings and renovations in NYC between 1920-1952.[11] Most of these are modest in scope, typically articles primarily in architectural journals, and often consisting largely of photographs with nominal captions. None of these various articles focuses on the landscape and gardens, prioritizing the architecture over the gardens, although all included at least a limited description of garden or landscape design. Consequently, the limited and somewhat obscure discourse about Suarez's work has focused on his architectural commissions rather than his landscape architecture achievements.

The NYT's 1953 article "At Dade County Art Museum, Miami, FL." was the first ever mention of Suarez's name in relation to the Vizcaya's gardens.[12] In addition, and without exception, all the publications on the formal garden movement initiated by the Anglo-Americans in Florence also omit Suarez's involvement as a designer or collaborator of those gardens.[13] Consequently, Suarez's gardens, other than Vizcaya, have never been a subject of inquiry.

Twenty years would pass before Suarez's name would appear again regarding his involvement at Vizcaya. John B. Bailey's '*The Villa Vizcaya*', published in a 1973 issue of *Classical America,* was the first of its kind in an architectural magazine after the NYT's article. The article is based primarily on interviews conducted by James T. Maher

[10] The New York Times, March 15, 1953

[11] These articles constitute part of the new archival research which is part of this dissertation.

[12] The article does not give full credit to Suarez but rather states that "The gardens, one of the finest examples of garden planning in the great Italian tradition ever built in America, *were designed by Paul Chalfin* with the collaboration of Diego Suarez."

[13] A review of these is addressed later in this chapter.

for his book "*The Twilight of Splendor: Chronicles of the Age of American laces'*,1975.[14] Maher was one of the few authors who interviewed Suarez after credits were restored to him for Vizcaya.[15] Prior to Suarez's death in 1974, the most inclusive mentions of his work for Vizcaya appeared mostly in periodicals.

In 1985, Kathryn Chapman Harwood published *The Lives of Vizcaya, Annals of a Great House,* made possible because of the survival, discovery and preservation of Vizcaya's archives.[16] Ms. Harwood's approach to the research for her book was nevertheless not limited to these archives. Trips to Kent and Buckinghamshire in England provided her with detailed information about the family seat of both the Deering's and Chaffin's.[17] But her curiosity did not extend to follow the same biographical inquiry approach for Hoffman or Suarez.

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[14] In this article Suarez is quoted several times describing his involvement in Vizcaya - the article adds one interesting clue regarding a garden that he might have been involved in the design of while he was still in Florence. It is the garden at Villa Caponi. It also confirms that Suarez was a close friend of Princess Gyhka. At the time the article appeared in 1973, Maher's book had not yet been published. It appears that Mr. Maher's title for his book changed from '*Splendor and Folly: Five tales from the age of American Palaces*' to '*The Twilight of Splendor: Chronicles of the Age of American Palaces*',1975. Maher interviewed Suarez in the Spring of 1965 (p. 190) for his forthcoming book, and excerpts of it, including added comments by Bayley as designated editor of this article and quotations from the Official Guide to Vizcaya are the basis of the material used by the author.

[15] Maher's notes on Vizcaya are held today at the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[16] The vast collection of drawings and letters were serendipitously found in a farm building in Vizcaya's grounds in the 1950's. The archives at Vizcaya contain much of the extensive correspondence between James Deering, Francis B. Hoffman and Paul Chalfin during the planning and construction of Vizcaya. This collection of letters was misplaced for several decades after the completion of the house. During the restoration program undertaken by the city of Miami in the 1950's, the letters were found, spilling out of dilapidated filing cabinets in a derelict building on the estate grounds. Although the administrators of the house had been searching for the correspondence, no one recognized immediately that they had found the letters, and they were marked for burning as unnecessary materials. Some of the letters were already burning when a staff member realized that they were the Vizcaya correspondence. The remaining letters were sent for conservation. Many of the letters are water stained, and the most severely damaged of them have now been enclosed in protective plastic covers. They have also been digitalized. Some of them have large burn holes. Nevertheless, the correspondence gives a vivid picture of the problems encountered during the creation of the house and Estate. Among the topics covered are reports on the progress of construction, as well as lengthy discussions about design changes.

[17] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

The publication of Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin's (2006) book *Vizcaya, the Villa and its Makers*, in which the garden figured prominently, provided the first scholarly and most comprehensive history of the garden and of Suarez's involvement in the project. Perhaps this is a function of the fact that it is the only publication about Vizcaya written by both an architect and a landscape architect.[18] In their attempt to narrowly define Suarez in his role as landscape architect of Vizcaya, Rybczynski and Olin certainly achieve a comprehensive analysis of Suarez and his legacy. However, they fail to link Suarez's work at Vizcaya to his previous gardens in Tuscany, his education in Florence, his contemporaries or his early life. Prior to their involvement in writing *Vizcaya, a Villa and its Makers*, neither had ever written on Suarez. Rybczynski, a professor of architecture at University of Pennsylvania and a colleague of Olin, outlined his less than enthusiastic opinion on Suarez where he characterizes Suarez as "a twenty-five-year-old gardening dilettante who became involved in the project more or less by accident".[19] Indeed, others had similar biases, referring to Suarez as a playboy,[20] someone lacking in talent but good at self-promotion. Such pejoratives miss the important role that men such as he played in American landscape architecture at the beginning of the 20th century. Olin, on the other hand, praises Suarez when he states that,

[18] Witold Rybczynski is an architectural critic while Laurie Olin is an established landscape Architect and theorist.

[19] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.P.9.

[20] Henry Hope Reed called Suarez a playboy when he was interviewed by Terry Schnadelbach for his book Secret Lives, Secret Gardens. James Maher also writes about Suarez being a playboy in his notes archived at the Vizcaya museum and Gardens Archives. Maher Folder.

> Suarez had taken up this material so well and so made it his daily sustenance, his life, that he was able to draw upon it with total confidence and ease. Everything was altered, transformed, or adjusted to its new context and adjacent elements. What one sees in Vizcaya is a result of someone working in a Classical language, not looking backward and copying, but looking forward and creating new things with a vocabulary and set of typological motifs. This is the sort of invention we see in the work of Vignola and Michelangelo, of Alberti and Bramante. It is more than working with a kit of parts but requires consummate artistry and feeling. This is something that cannot be taught, but only discovered and learned by extremely talented individuals. Regardless of any thought we may have today about the appropriateness of such an endeavor, as with the main house, this is no copying Classical architecture, but rather performing it.[21]

Perhaps the greatest similarity between Rybczynski & Olin and Karthyn Chapman Harwood's books is the fact that through their research they found that the story of the Estate was in fact the story of its people: *its owner and his design team*.[22] Yet, in both cases, the complete story of Suarez is missing, leaving the story of Vizcaya's garden incomplete. This study addresses this gap by examining Villa Vizcaya's landscape architect, Diego Suarez, with respect to the social and cultural processes directly bearing on his design for the formal garden. I will argue that Suarez's process of interpretation of the Italian Garden style for a sub-tropical climate was an essentially social process. By using the concept of design-as-a-social process (DASP)

[21] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. P.195.

[22] Kathryn Chapman Harwood, author and one-time head of the volunteer guides for the house, used the correspondence and documents found in the farm building as the basis of her book, *The Lives of Vizcaya*. In doing so, she added marginal comments and summaries in ink, directly on the original documents, highlighting points which she hoped to use in her book. Her actions have violated the integrity of the letters. Her summaries have made it difficult to read the letters without sensing her presence of ideas. Finally, she arranged the letters in an arbitrary way making it impossible to find the letter which contains the answer to a question posed in another letter. The letters are housed in what was a sewing room, just off one of the main staircases of the house. They are in acid free file boxes, but the room has not been stabilized for temperature humidity. Also included in the room are full sets of architectural blueprints from Hoffman, Chalfin and Suarez. Many of these prints remain in the original metal cylinders in which they arrived from various architectural offices in New York City. The blueprints cover all aspects of the construction, including Hoffman's designs for the house and the estate outbuildings, Chalfin's elevations for interior decoration and Suarez's designs for the gardens.

and suggesting that design is a product of the society the designer lives in, I will argue that the interpretation of the Italian garden style that Suarez carried out at the level of his individual design ideas for Villa Vizcaya was already an essentially social process. In addition, I will show how design decisions in Vizcaya are related to his earlier work, and finally, how specific elements from Italian designs situated in a hilly, temperate climate were uniquely translated to a flat sub-tropical terrain.[23]

My research methods and interpretive strategies can be characterized as interpretations of built works based on primary experiences mediated through the knowledge of historical and biographical situations. This primary experience had two forms: visiting the specific subject sites of this research, and studying historical plans, maps, journals, letters, photographs, biographies, and other archival material. Previous works that address Vizcaya and Suarez also used similar methods but lacked the biographical aspect of the landscape designer and of his previous works.

Because the mixture of history and theory is still somewhat confusing for landscape historians and theoreticians, and because this study addresses both, I transcribe below the distinction stated by Terrence Schnadelbach in *Space and Form: A Cultural Theory of Landscape Architecture* (2015). [24]

> In the discussion of a landscape architecture theory, there exists a confusing mixture of history and theory by many landscape historians and

[23] David Leatherborrow, John Dixon Hunt, and Laurie Olin clarified the meaning of 'translation' in the context of what they have called 'The arrival and use of 'foreign' models in America' to help formulate what can be at stake in any correspondence of gardens and gardens themes involving specifically, not the process of taking ideas from another country,(garden makers did that all the time) but how to describe the effective use of them in American landscape architecture, namely the *results* not the inspiration of their importations.'
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14601176.2011.591529?scroll=top&needAccess=true

[24] Schnadelbach, Terry R. 2015. *Space and Form: A Cultural Theory of Landscape Architecture.* New York: LAUD Press. P.9.

theoreticians. There are two distinctly separate and opposing or competing landscape subjects. The historian studies the sequential developments of built landscapes, the garden's chronology, the particulars of personage behind its creation (the owners of the landscapes and the naming of landscape designers and landscape architects) and the facts behind its existence. The historian codifies these aspects linearly in chronological order. In a different analysis, the work of a landscape theorist entails investigation of the, how, what, its context and its *raison d'etre*. It examines the why of a built landscape and how one landscape relates to others. The historian studies dates and personage. The theorist studies the aspects of a project's relationship to social and artistic connections.

Theoretical Framework: Design as a Social Process

The lone design genius, if not mythical or completely extinct, is surely on the endangered species list. Nowadays, significant design projects require teams of designers coordinating the varied expertise to arrive at effective design solutions.[25]

In the 1990's, Michael Conan (Director of Landscape Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, 1998-2008) and a group of scholars and practitioners in France and Italy, reconfigured the study of gardens and landscapes as a new field. Geographers, philosophers, sociologists, architects, art historians and literary critics joined forces in considering the garden as both an object of historical study and a medium through which questions of societal interests could be discussed.[26] Nonetheless, according to Brabec, the field has struggled to develop a theoretical construct for historical landscape analysis.[27] Viewing design-as-a-social-process provides a context for such a theoretical

[25] Domeshek, E.A; Kolodner,J.L.; Billington, R.; Zimring,C.M. 1994. *Using Theories to overcome social obstacles in design Collaboration.* In Papers from the AAAI Workshop: AI and Collaboration Design, by M.L. Maher, F. Sudweeks (eds.) J.S. Gero, 143-148. AAAI Press.

[26] Benes, Mirka. 2011.Clio in the *Italian Garden: Twenty-First-Century Studies in Historical Methods and Theoretical Perspectives.* Washington D.C. Dumbarton Oaks Research and Library Collection.

[27] Brabec, Elizabeth. 2004. Landscape Change: *The influence of external cultural forces. Proceedings of the 5th International Workshop on Sustainable Land Use Planning. 4.* Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/larp_faculty_pubs/4

construct and a basis for evaluation of the influence of the Italian garden in the United States in the early 20th century. For the concept design-as-a-social-process, several topic areas are of interest, but this dissertation will focus specifically on how design processes and social processes overlap and interact.[28]

A relatively new theory, design-as-a-social-process is defined mainly by the contention that design is an essentially social process where design is practiced and the outcome produced emerges as stakeholders incorporate insights from their different fields of knowledge or influence. A social process approach to design situates any particular design approach in the internal thought structures that have origins in the designer's previous social interactions,[29] hence the personal design perspective or voice is a consolidation of many perspectives and voices.[30] Ultimately, design-as-a-social-process theory alleges that design emerges from the designer's social environment, and therefore embodies a combination of experiences, design styles and other societal factors of its time and its place.

Design-as-a-social-process provides a basis for evaluating the influence of the Italian garden in the United States in the early 20th century. We can begin to understand the revival of the Italian garden in early 20th century if we study the social vectors of change and the design choices made because of them. Deetz states that any

[28] Love, Terrence. 2003. "*Design as a social process: bodies, brains, and social aspects of designing*," Journal of Design Research 3(1).

[29] Mead, G.H..1934,1962. *Mind, Self and Society*. Chicago, IL. University of Chicago Press; Vygotsky, L.1930,1978. *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press.

[30] Bakhtin, M.M.1986." *The Problem of Speech Genres*," in C. Emerson and M. Holquist (eds.), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, Austin, TX., University of Virginia Press. P. 60-102.; Borland, R.J. and &Tenkasi,1995. "Perspective Making and Perspective Taking in Communities of Knowing," *Organization Science*, 6 (4), P. 350-372.

man-made object ‘is the result of a series of decisions’.[31] The form and expression of design migrates from one society to another through a variety of vectors: war and conquest, human migration, the secondary diffusion of travelers, and the movement of objects through trade and economic development. The process of landscape design enabled by these vectors can then be identified as a series of design choices.[32]

In addition, a social processes framework permits discussion of the influence of the designer's own culture on his/her work of design, which, in my belief, is a vital component to understanding the design. It is my contention that culture is one of the most important aspects of our daily lives, and that the designer’s own cultural values play a primary role in influencing the design. As far as can be determined, the relationship between the designer’s own culture and the designs that he/she creates has received sparse attention within the landscape architecture design research field. Having a framework that lets us think about and ask about the hidden influences pertaining to our designs is what design-as-a-social-process proposes to assist with.

The question then becomes how a theory of social activity is best articulated with a theory of design activity. This study identifies and explores specific connections and inter-relationships between the concepts of design and social process, and in doing so, how one designer, Diego Suarez, created a landscape design vectored by the social, cultural and economic factors of its time. I will argue that Suarez's process of re-interpreting the Italian garden for Vizcaya was an essentially social process, testing the

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[31] Deetz, J.F. 1968. “*Cultural Patterning of Behavior as Reflected by Archeological Methods*”, In Settlement Archeology edited by K.C. Chang. Palo Alto, CA. National Press Books. P. 32.

[32] Brabec, Elizabeth,. 2004. “*Landscape Change: The influence of external cultural forces*,” Proceedings of the 5th International Workshop on Sustainable Land Use Planning. 4. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/larp_faculty_pubs/4.

utility of design-as-a-social-process theory as an explanatory tool in landscape architectural theory.

To understand Suarez's design for Vizcaya as a social process, one must trace the history of the Italian garden, his upbringing in Bogota, Colombia, his education in Florence, the economic boom that produced the American Renaissance and most importantly, the social milieu which surrounded his life and career on three continents. Suarez can be understood as a spatial translator of all these cultural values and as an early agent in adapting and interpreting classical design in a flat landscape and in a tropical climate. To accomplish this task, Suarez was in possession of the social and technical skills that allowed him to create this living work of art.

Understanding Vizcaya's contribution to American landscape architecture can only be complete if we answer how Suarez came to be Vizcaya's designer --how his background, training and previous experience in Florence translates into the final design. In doing so, this project answers broader questions:

- How does understanding Diego Suarez contribute to our understanding of the design for Villa Vizcaya’s garden in the history of American Landscape Architecture?
- How do specific design elements migrate across times and between terrains?
- Why was the Italian cultural identity important for a certain Anglo-American social class in the early 20th century -- why did they embrace the formal Italian garden in search for this identity?

CHAPTER 2
FRAMEWORKS OF UNDERSTANDING DESIGN

> *"Culture, in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned and accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning."* [1]

> "*Landscape is a cultural expression that does not happen by chance but is created by design as a result of human ideologies.*" [2]

This dissertation employs design-as-a-social-process to excavate the design of the garden at Vizcaya by illuminating the particulars of a social group during a specific time and place. These two situations, the physical and cultural boundaries of each individual space, as well as the temporal boundaries in which the project occurred, will be compared and analyzed vis-à-vis the biographical, historical and social components to reveal critical aspects of the design. Design-as-a-social-process claims that designing as a practice entails negotiation among social influences. These influences include the designer, the client, the site, the designing activities, and the times in which the design took place. Given the importance of the designer, Suarez requires a separate chapter. In this chapter, I will first review the theoretical framework, design-as-a-social-process. In the next chapter, I will briefly present one of the larger background influences: landscape architecture in the Americas. In the next chapter, the other major agents in the social process will be taken up, starting with the historical and cultural specifics that brought the Deerings to Florida and ultimately, to Vizcaya.

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[1] https://web.stanford.edu/~hakuta/www/archives/syllabi/E_CLAD/sfusd_cult_03/melissa/Culture%20Defined.htm

[2] Taylor, Ken. n.d. "*Landscape and Memory:Cultural Landscapes, Intangible Values and some thoughts on Asia*," Paper, Research School of Humanities, The Australian National University, Canberra.

Design as a Social and Cultural Process

> Design products (from buildings to policies) are motivated by and realized within a social environment. The agents (individuals or social structures) that constitute the context or environment of design, provide both the requirements and the final evaluations of the design products; so they should be considered as essential parts of it." [3]

Design is often a collaborative – hence, *social* – activity.[4] Nonetheless, the concept of design-as-a-social process is a relative new theory in the design research literature.[5] Historically DASP developed recently, mainly related to product design research, having evolved from previous theories in design which largely excluded the socio-cultural aspects embodied in the process and outcomes of design.

The first classical architect of note was Vitruvius Pollio who, in 27 BC, set out the first theory of architecture. He summarized design as containing three ingredients: commodity, firmness and delight. By commodity, Vitruvius meant functional aspects of design. By firmness, he meant the presentation of an environment that would nourish and support all things of the composition, particularly, environmental conditions that would support the appropriate plant growth, supply adequate water and provide

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[3] Alexiou, K. and Zamenopolous, T. 2007.*Design as a social process: A complex Systems perspective.*Dept of Design Innovation, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.

[4] Buchiarelli, L.L.,1984. "*Reflective Practice in Engineering Design"*. *Design Studies*, 5(3). P. 185-190; Friedman, K. and Tellefsen, B. 1997. *Consumer and Designer as Product Development Partners.* Paper presented at the Consumer-Centered Design, Kuopio Academy of Craft and Design; Tellefsen, B. 2000. "*Cross-Functional and Inter-Disciplinary Integration for Doctoral Education in Design: Theory and Experience,"* In D. Durling and K. Friedman (Eds.), in *Design: Foundation for the Future.* U.K., Straffordshire University Press; Tellefsen, B. 2001. "Market Orientation and partnership learning in product development and design," In S. Ilstad (Ed.), Industrial Organization and Business Management. Trondheim: Tapir Akademiske Forlag. P.405.

[5] Love, Terrence. 2003."*Design as a social process: bodies, brains, and social aspects of designing*," Journal of Design Research 3(1). Amabile, T.M.,1983. *The Social Psychology of Creativity*. New York. Springer-Verlag; Berger, P. and Luckman, T.,1987. *The Social Construction of Reality*. England. Penguin Books. Buchiarelli, L.L.,1984. *Reflective Practice in Engineering Design*. Design Studies, 5(3). P. 185-190.

conditions suitable for human use. By delight, Vitruvius meant beauty; the aesthetics of all the parts as well as the whole landscape composition.

Since Vitruvius, many theories of design have derived from social sciences. These include the theories of Gestalt, the European Picturesque approach, Functionalism, Rationalism, and many others. Gestalt theory was developed early in the twentieth century by German and Austrian psychologists. It can be summed up with the phrase "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" [6]. For the visual arts, Gestalt theory is especially important because it employs a visual system of organization or a system of putting components together. Using the Gestalt theory to analyze a project, the focus may be on the whole or the parts; however, the analysis of the parts must reflect the whole design. The European Picturesque was an 18th century cultural manifestation based on sublime aesthetics, but with the addition of power and the awe aspects of nature: it is a landscape composition theory based on realistic duplication of natural scenery.

Functionalism is important to the field of architecture and design because it had a great impact on modern architects such as le Corbusier and Louis Sullivan and was reflected in their work. One of the guiding principles of the theory of functionalism is that "form follows function", a phrase usually attributed to Sullivan (1856-1924), the first modern architect of the twentieth century. This phrase is also associated with the Bauhaus school of design [7]. The three key concepts of functionalism are function,

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[6] Loustau, Jennifer. 1988. *A Theoretical Base for Interior Design: A review of four approaches from related fields*. Wiley Online Library. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-1668.1988.tb00114.x. Retrieved October 2018.

[7] Pile, John. 2000. *History of Interior Design*. Wiley & Sons, Inc.

fitness, and utility. Beauty is an additional concept that is integrated into all these concepts. Function relates to the purpose of the structure, space, or object.[8]. Fitness relates to the suitability of the structure, space, or object relative to its purpose. Utility relates to the structure, space or object's usefulness relative to the satisfaction of the user.[9]

Rationalism, developed in Italy in the 1920s-1930s, followed Vitruvius in its view that architecture is a science that can be comprehended rationally. This theory was taken up and further developed in the architectural treatises of the Renaissance. A Neo-Rationalist movement emerged in Italy in the 1960's led by Aldo Rossi (1931-1997) in search for an understanding of the city beyond functionalism. In Germany, Oswald Mathias Ungers became the leading practitioner of German rationalism from the mid-1960s and influenced a younger generation of architects including Leon Krier and Hans Kollhoff.

All these theories specifically exclude the reality that design embodies multiple social agents/inputs. Design-as-a-social-process (DASP) addresses this gap. A social-process-oriented framework sees any particular design as the instantiation of many design agents, including the designer, the client, the site, as well as the historical moment when these agents act together. In this sense, the final result emerges dynamically, even unpredictably, from the interaction of the agents. Somewhat paradoxically, a social-process analysis better illuminates the contribution of the

[8] Bartuska, Tom & Young, Gerald. 1994. *The Built Environment: A Creative Inquiry into Design & Planning*.Crisp/WKI.

[9] Smith, David.1911. *The Teaching of Geometry*.Amazon Digital Services.

designer because it includes the socio-cultural aspects embedded in the designer's personality and perception which inevitably influence the final design.

DASP is a relatively new approach to understanding a design, where a designer mines his/her cultural subconscious in search of images that will allow him/her to better resolve a 'problem' the designer is faced with when confronting a design. Everyone retains in memory sites of significance: places that surround us. For all architectural designers, the memories of the places and events of our lives provide a dynamic form of *in*-sight. In his essay, "Transcending Memory: remembrance and the design of place," F. Downing states that,

> We all retain memories of places. They identify who we are as individuals. At the same time, they tie us to networks of people, culture and society. Our ability to transcend our own experiences, demonstrates the power and potential that memories hold for us as we create future places. When we, as architectural designers, understand how memorable experiences translate into meaningful inquiry and design strategies, it points us toward fruitful speculations and comparisons and helps us develop a broad range of conceivable avenues to pursue and evaluate. We complete a meaningful design cycle by not only prying our remembered past loose from its content, but also by imagining the future through referring to that past.[10]

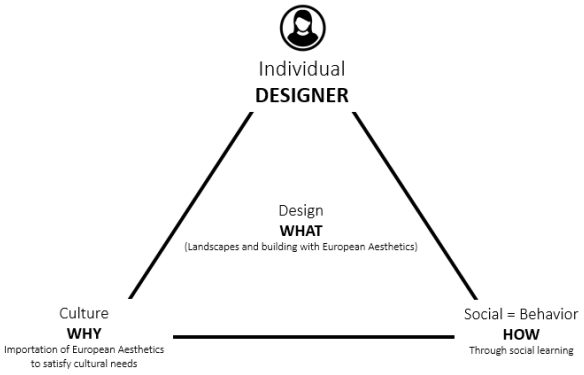


Figure 2-1. Agents and Interactions in the Social Process of Design

[10] F. Downing, *Transcending memory: remembrance and the design of place*. College of Architecture, Texas A&M University. Design Studies. 2013.

In DASP, design is a product of 3 “forces” – social, cultural, individual. Next, I will present three designers – Philippe Starck, Luis Barragan, and Laurinda Spear – each of whom communicates in different ways the interplay of social forces that interact in the practice, thus ultimate product, of design.

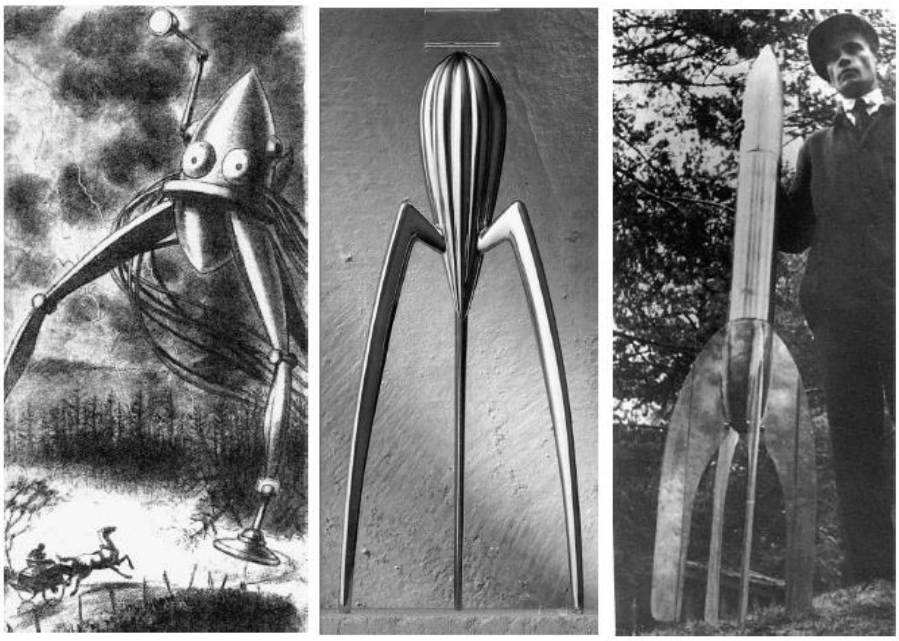
Philippe Stark

Figure 2-2. Juicy Salif. Reprinted with permission from Google, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Juicy_Salif_-_78365.jpg (September 8, 2018)

First, consider Philippe Starck’s Juicy Salif citrus squeezer. Lloyd and Snelders demonstrate how Starck’s citrus squeezer’s seemingly simple design could be profoundly rooted in the inner layers of a designer’s personality and perception.

As a child, Starck regularly fell asleep under his father’s drawing board. He often peeked at his father’s work (he was an aircraft designer) and dreamed about flying away in his own little aero-plane. In his teenage years, after his father had left, he

continued to like modern things; flight was (after all) a modern thing in the 1960s. He liked looking to the future, and to science fiction. His favorite films of the time include *Forbidden Planet* and *Godzilla*. He read nearly every book of his favorite author Phillip K Dick[11] and these would stay in his mind. Starch liked looking at Sci-Fi cartoons,[12] and he spent much of his time re-drawing characters and objects from comic strips (Figure 2-3), particularly spaceships, which remind him of his father. He likes looking backwards but always with an eye on the future of history.[13]



(a) (b) (c)

Figure 2-3. Philippe Starck. (a) The world under attack by aliens; (b) Juicy Salif. (c) Soviet rocket from the 1930s designed by Ivanovich Polyarny. Reprinted with permission from Science Direct, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0142694X02000546 (August 30, 2018).

[11] Dick, P K. 1962. *The Man in the High Castle.* Vintage, New York.

[12] Morgan, C L.1999. *Philippe Starck.* Universe, New York.

[13] Nobel, P. 1988. '*Starck Realities*'. Metropolis Magazine, October 1988. www.metropolismag.com Retrieved October 2018.

In terms of design, the citrus squeezer reveals severally socially-grounded design-specific details. The first is the material it is made from: aluminum. Compared with steel, aluminum was a modern metal, one that has associations with aircraft, with lightness, and with anti-corrosion. The lemon squeezer won't rust away, it has a feeling of permanence about it. The feeling of the object's permanence also comes from the method of making the squeezer: casting. It is a simple, traditional technique that sometimes produces imperfections, but generally works well. Strong things are usually cast. Industrial revolutions were founded on cast iron as an industrial material. The modern material is, then, underpinned by a traditional technique.

Aluminum as a material has been said to give a feeling of 'nostalgia for the future'[14], and there are other features of the lemon squeezer that one can associate with a future imagined from the past. Chief among these is its rocket or spaceship associations. Not with rockets of the present, but with old-style rockets, like those of Soviet inventors. At the time rockets promised an exciting, high-tech future of space exploration, a long way from war-torn planet Earth. This 'future of the past' feeling is maintained by the streamlining of the squeezer's body (a teardrop being a good aerodynamic shape). Starting in the thirties and continuing into the fifties, streamlining made everything look modern, and the metaphor of streamlining, speeding unhindered towards the future, became a metaphor of social and technological progress[15].

[14] Nicols, S. 2000. *Aluminium by design*, Harold Abrams, New York.

[15] Giedion, S. 1948. *Mechanization takes command: a contribution to anonymous history.* Norton, New York.

Lloyd and Snelders confirm the importance of the designer's preferences in design and found that every product is influenced by two different designing processes; firstly, by the designer's individual process of designing and secondly, by broader contextual design factors in culture and society.[16]

Luis Barragan

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 2-4.Luis Barragan (a) Barragan House Roof; (b) Fuente de los Amantes; (c) Torres de Satellites. Reprinted with the permission of Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis_Barragán#/media (October 23,2018).

Mexican architect, Luis Barragan, elegantly alludes to the meanings of DASP in his acceptance speech for the Pritzker Prize in 1998.

> My architecture is autobiographical… Underlying all that I have achieved…I share the memories of my father's ranch where I spent my childhood and adolescence. In my work I have always strived to adapt to the needs of modern living the magic of those remote nostalgic years.
>
> In the creation of a garden, the architect invites the partnership of the Kingdom of Nature. …Ferdinand Bac taught us that "the soul of gardens shelters the greatest sum of serenity at man's disposal," and it is to him that I am indebted for my longing to create a perfect garden. …It will appear obvious, then, that a garden must combine the poetic and the mysterious with a feeling of serenity and joy….
>
> To the south of Mexico City lies a vast extension of volcanic rock, arid, overwhelmed by the beauty of this landscape, I decided to create a series

[16] P. Lloyd and D. Snelders, Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft, Landbergstraat 15, 2628 BX Delft, The Netherlands. © 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved. Printed in Great Britain. Retrieved August 31,2018 https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0142694X02000546 Design Studies, Vol. 24, issue 3, May 2003, Pages 237-253

> of gardens to humanize, without destroying, its magic. While walking along the lava crevices, under the shadow of imposing ramparts of live rock, I suddenly discovered, to my astonishment, small secret green valleys the shepherds call them “jewels” surrounded and enclosed by the most fantastic, capricious rock formations wrought on soft, melted rock by the onslaught of powerful prehistoric winds. The unexpected discovery of these ‘jewels’ gave me a sensation similar to the one experienced when, having walked through a dark and narrow tunnel of the Alhambra, I suddenly emerged into the serene, silent and solitary “Patio of the Myrtles” hidden in the entrails of that ancient palace. Somehow, I had the feeling that it enclosed what a perfect garden no matter its size should enclose: nothing less than the entire Universe.
>
> While awake or when sleeping, the sweet memories of marvelous fountains have accompanied me throughout my life. I recall the fountains of my childhood…The lessons to be learned from the unassuming architecture of the village and provincial towns of my country have been a permanent source of inspiration. Such, for instance, the whitewashed walls; the peace to be found in patios and orchards; the colorful streets…
>
> Nostalgia is the poetic awareness of our personal past, and since the artist’s own past is the mainspring of his creative potential, the architect must listen and heed his nostalgic revelations.

Barragan is known for his striking work as one of Mexico’s most famous and revolutionary architects. He once proclaimed, “I don’t divide architecture, landscape and gardening; to me they are one.” This is evident in his project Cuadra San Cristóbal**,** the stables of an equestrian-oriented rural development. Pools such as the one pictured below are designed and intentioned for horses to wade in to drink, and the stable buildings are bright pink. As mentioned in his speech for his Pritzer Prize, Barragan was heavily influenced by his family’s ranch in Jalisco where rain storms, red clay earth, and the natural landscape were inspirations to his work as an architect and are apparent in much of his work.

(a) (b)

Figure 2-5.Luis Barragan (a) Cuadra San Cristobal, Lover's Fountain; (b) Courtyard Reprinted with permission from Styleture, http://styleture.com (October 26,2018)

Cuadra San Cristóbal is a combination of experimental works in the international modern movement, while also presenting the architectural elements of the ranchos and the haciendas of traditional Mexico exposing the cultural projections through his design.

Barragan left his artistic testament at the Lovers Fountain designed in 1964. With this fountain he created a public space within the equestrian project of San Cristobal. With this realization Barragan expressed highlights of a lifetime of memories and contemplation visible in the abstraction of the forms and space.

Figure 2-6.Lover's Fountain. Reprinted with the permission of Wikiarquitectura, https://en.wikiarquitectura.com (October 28,2018).

His memories of the Jewels in the Lava caves and the Patio of the Myrtes at the Alhambra inspired his masterful manipulation of light, and the careful placement of windows and space openings allowed him to control the amount, direction and the tone, softening it during the day and filtering it through shade. The building is dressed with colors to indicate the Mexican Baroque tradition along persistent and high walls that are arranged around the reflecting pools. Water is a recurring motif in the work of Barragan, a result of the colonial influence of wells or aqueducts characteristic of that time; he creates true sculptures that become standalone works of art. In this project, Luis Barragán emphasizes the different memories he alludes to in his speech for the Pritzer Prize Award.

Fort-Brescia and Spear

Figure 2-7.Atlantis Condominium. Reprinted with the permission of Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org (October 28,2018).

Finally, I would like to end this section with an example that I know well. One which I discovered by chance when speaking to Laurinda Spear[17] a few years ago. It

[17] Laurinda Spear is founding Principal of Arquitectonica and ArquitectonicaGEO.

has to do with the Atlantis, the first major project that Arquitectonica designed in Miami in 1978. Much has been said about this building, but few, if any, know what it represents. In a recent article in the New York Times, Adam Furman writes that,

> Arquitectonica forged a tectonic image of Miami as a forward-looking site of impetuous but warranted self-assurance. Fort-Brescia's home country of Peru no doubt provided an important source of alternative inspiration and helped tie the practice to the idea of Miami as the fulcrum between Latin and North America.[18]

The façade is inspired on the grid mandated by the 'Law of the Indies' used in all Spanish Colonial cities. The six-story opening 'square' was meant to represent the actual 'square', the gathering place in a typical Spanish town. The red roof is a homage to the Spanish clay tiles. All these elements, one can assume, were embedded in Fort-Brescia's memory from his home town of Lima, which he and Spear translated into the architecture creating a distinct new architectural language for the 'magic' city. Furman goes on to say that;

> These familial, stylistic, and business links to Latin America set the practice apart from the distinctly Eurocentric crowd that defined high architecture of the day. Looking back, they lend the work a distinct relevance today, when architecture that is truly cross-cultural, as well as confident and forthright, is frustratingly hard to come by in a world putting up barriers and reinforcing borders everywhere one looks.[19]

[18] Furman, Adan Nathaniel. (2018) The Architects Who Made Miami 'Magic' Retrieved from: https://www.citylab.com/design/2018/09/the-architects-who-made-miami-magic/569245/

[19] Ibid.

Figure 2-8.Norman McGraff. *Atlantis Condominium*. 1982. Miami, FL., courtesty of Arquitectonica International Archives. © 1982 by Norman McGraff.

Figure 2-9.Norman McGraff. *Atlantis Condominium*. 1982. Miami, FL., courtesty of Arquitectonica International Archives. © 1982 by Norman McGraff.

Design Practice/Process

> *Gardens, too, mean rather than are. Their various signs are constituted of all the elements that compose them - elects of human intervention like terraces or the shape of flower beds, elements of nature like water and trees-but they are nonetheless signs, to be read by outsiders in time and space for what they tell of a certain society.*[20]

Defining “design” is more complicated than it appears at first glance, encompassing a range from the cognitive to the behavioral and indicating process as well as product. As defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, design is: “originally a mental viewing - an idea or mental plan…a formation of apparent relationships or underlying principles of certain observed phenomena which has been verified to some degree forming a systematic statement of principles involved.” Schnadelbach (2010) defines design process as "an act invented by humans and achieved through posed concepts, observed phenomena, models and sketches, that illustrate ideas, and through built works."[21] Warr & O'Neill argue that terms such as creativity and innovation are frequently used when referring to "design process" but practitioners and researchers provide little definition of what this term means and what is involved in this process of social creativity.[22]

Some of the process-oriented meanings attributed to the term 'design' include the prosaic, “To create, fashion, execute, or construct according to plan.”[23], or more

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[20] Hunt, John Dixon. 1991. *The Garden as Cultural Object*. In Denatured Visions, by H. Adams and S. Wrede, 28. New York: Museum of Modern Art.

[21] Schnadelbach, Terry R. 2015. *Space and Form: A Cultural Theory of Landscape Architecture*. New York: LAUD Press.

[22] Warr, Andy and O'Neill,Eamonn. 2005. Understanding Design as a Social Creative Process. Department of Computer Science, University of Bath, Bath.

[23] Retrieved from: https://www.merriam-webster.com/

constructionist, “a specification of an object, manifested by some agent, intended to accomplish goals, in an environment, using a set of primitive components, satisfying a set of requirements, subject to some constraint” [24] to the sweeping: “the composition of a desired figure toward the future.”[25]

The above definitions largely leave out the social nature of design. Social process is any process or activity that includes at least one act of social interaction between people alongside other activities.[26] Gennari and Reddy describe the design process as "A human activity involving communication and creative thought **among a group of participants**" (emphasis added).[27] Koestler proposed that design involves a process whereby an individual connects previously unrelated matrices of thought to produce an idea. Therefore, these matrices of thought can be construed as ***cultural influences*** in the mind of one or more persons in the design group.[28]

Lynch and Hack highlight the way that each designer adapts the stages of the design process to their individual experiences and attitudes, as well as to the needs and characteristics of the project.[29] Warr & O'Neill agree, stating that some theoretical

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[24] Randolph,Paul and Wand,Jair. 2009.A Proposal for a Formal Definition of the Design Concept. In *Design Requirements Engineering: A Ten-Year Perspective.* British Columbia. P. 103-136.

[25] Taura, Toshihari and Nagai, Yukari. n.d. A definition of design and its Creative Features. Kobe University, Japan and Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology. P. 3 Retrieved from http://www.research.kobe-u.ac.jp/eng-mech-design/taura/img/taura_pub/72.pdf

[26] Love, Terrence. 2003. Design as a social process: bodies, brains, and social aspects of designing. *Journal of Design Research 3(1).*

[27] Gennari, J.H. and Reddy, M. 2000. *Participatory Design and an Eligibility Screen Tool*. Proceedings from the AMI Annual Fall Symposium, P. 290-294.

[28] Koestler, A. 1964. *The Act of Creation.* New York: Dell.

[29] Lynch, Kevin and Hack, Gary. 1984*. Site Planning.* Boston: MIT Press, 3rd Edition.

perspectives such as “distributed cognition” [30] focus on the inclusion of significant features in the environment that support the development of design ideas and understandings.[31] Cooley considered that individuals were products of social interaction, in that people come to know who they are through their interactions with others. Because people tend to interact in groups, it is not surprising that individual tastes change as they interact with the different groups that matter to them. Therefore, their design interests and styles will change too.[32] From these perspectives, we can consider DASP as combining matrices of thought stemming from a designer’s social activity during a period of his life which may have origins in interpersonal relations, culture and even the environment around him.

In addition to the social and cultural factors impacting the designer, the actual design is also shaped by other actors: consultants, contractors, clients, users, and so on. Therefore, a design is not only a compilation of the experiences and influences of the designer but an amalgamation of factors resulting from these contributors. Hofstede in his book *Culture’s Consequences*, demonstrates that all aspects of human life are influenced by culture and cultural values. We can therefore assume, that design activity is also influenced by culture.[33]

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[30] Distributed Cognition moves away from the individual mind and focuses on the inclusion of significant features in the environment that support cognition. From this perspective we may consider the creative process as combining matrices of thought in our mind and our environment.

[31] Warr, Andy and O'Neill,Eamonn. 2005. *Understanding Design as a Social Creative Process*. Department of Computer Science, University of Bath, Bath.

[32] Cooley, Charles H. 1902, 2009. *Human Nature and the Social Order.* Ithaca: Cornell University Library.

[33] Hofstede, Geert. 2003. *Culture's Consequences: comparing values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations.* New York: Sage Publications. Retrieved from : https://www.gala-global.org/industry/intro-language-industry/what-translation. 2017.

Hannerz argues that all kinds of cultures learned and acquired in social life are highly integrated and act as “packages of meaning and meaningful forms”. [34] Hoftstede believes that this incorporation of culture is mostly unconscious, because no mental activities of humans can be culture free.[35] This would lead us to believe that design activity is unconsciously influenced by the designer’s cultural values and preferences.

This suggests that ultimately, design-as-a-social-process (DASP) is a theory or approach alleging that design is a direct product of the society the designer lives in and is therefore a reflection of a combination of experiences, design styles and other societal factors of its time and its place. Design is a social rather than individual activity - and an understanding of this activity is essential to the understanding of what an individual designer's contribution was to an important design work. Villa Vizcaya, as previously stated, is a product of its owner and his design team, but who produced the ideas that generated the final design and how were these ideas orchestrated and made manifest? How did Suarez’s own socio-cultural values influence his design for Vizcaya? To answer this question, we need to trace back his life in Bogota, in Florence and in the New York. If we regard a garden as the amalgamation and manifestation of a set of physical and non-physical codes by which a designer can communicate artifacts of his own socio-cultural background, by looking at the different biographical aspects of the designer, we can begin to decipher his design.

[34] Hannerz, Ulf. 1996. *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. New York: Routledge.

[35] Hofstede, Geert. 2003. *Culture's Consequences: comparing values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations.* New York: Sage Publications. Retrieved from : https://www.gala-global.org/industry/intro-language-industry/what-translation. 2017.

Taylor et al argue that the larger the number of ideas produced, the greater the possibility of achieving an effective solution. So how did the diverse cultural backgrounds of this group of designers influence the outcome of the final design? Is it possible to trace these cultural influences back to the individual designers? [36]

This study takes a critical perspective, identifies and explores specific connections and inter-relationships between the designer, Diego Suarez, and his landscape designs supported by the social, cultural and economic factors of its time. Gardens tell us a great deal about a culture; perhaps, if the evidence is accessible, more than any other art. Drawing together the strands of previous research on this subject, I propose to use DASP as a framework within which to understand the creation of Villa Vizcaya.

DASP permits an examination of a designer's social activity during a period of his life as it translates into personal meanings which have origins in his interpersonal relations and culture. However, this social context is hidden because it has been incorporated into the tacit understanding of the individual designer and can only be made visible by means of his designs. By entering a social process, the designer resolves a specific design problem through design activity. This interchange between social activity and design activity results in a new interpretation of the design style which incorporates the tacit socio-cultural knowledge acquired by the designer through the social process. The medium of design language is grounded in the life experiences of the designer, his physical embodiment, in his sense of rationality, in the interaction

[36] Taylor, D.W.; Berry, P.C. and Block C.H. 1958. *Does Group participation when using Brainstorming Facilitate or Inhibit Creative Thinking?*. Administrative Science Quarterly 3.1, P. 23-47.

patterns of his communication, in his cultural traditions and in the vast background knowledge that is implicitly accepted in every act of design.

Furthermore, the social process that results in a design product incorporates empirical evidence and logical deduction from other established knowledge of the designer who is constantly solving problems by internalizing cultural meaning. This meaning comes to life with the construction of the artifact that ultimately preserves the socio-cultural design language translated to it by the designer.

I will argue that Suarez's process of re-interpretation of the Italian garden for Vizcaya was an essentially social process, testing the utility of DASP theory which claims that design can be explained in terms of distinguishable biographical phases[37] of the individual designer which are made visible when they are translated into his designs.

This study presents observations from four of Suarez's surviving landscapes in Florence and compares these findings with his formal design for Villa Vizcaya in Miami. From a theoretical perspective, the design process observed in this study provides an insight into the provenance of the different design elements of the Vizcaya garden and further illuminates the extent of Suarez's involvement as the lead designer for the landscape as well as his technical ability to offer a creative solution to the existing problem of the flat terrain without compromising the principles of design of the formal Italian Garden.

[37] In Suarez' case, very distinguishable designs were produced that clearly distinguish his Italian and French influences during different phases in his life. The garden at Vizcaya is a clear product of Suarez's life period in Florence, Italy. It can be contrasted with his design for the Hotel Granada in Bogota Colombia, which is a clear product of his life period in Paris.

The gardens that Diego Suarez (1888-1974) designed during his youth constitute an important yet unexamined part of his oeuvre. This oversight is evidenced in the recently reviewed literature of American landscape history in the 20th century, in particular in relationship to the design for James Deering's Villa Vizcaya in Miami. Yet, despite being the principal landscape designer, Suarez was virtually excluded from this history. This dissertation examines a selection of Suarez's gardens, most of which either have not been studied before or have been interpreted in a limited manner. It situates these gardens in Italy before WWI and in the context of the Anglo-American community in Florence to consider the larger question of their relation to the landscape dimension of Suarez's design for the formal garden at Vizcaya. To fully understand the landscape dimension, it is important to confront the context in which they were produced.

Recognizing that Suarez's work opens onto his life as much as his life opens upon his work, it is necessary to explore certain aspects of his personal life when it illuminates the topics of his landscapes and gardens, locating this discrete body of work within the historical context in relation to the cultural history of the American Renaissance.

CHAPTER 3
PREPPING THE GROUND FOR VIZCAYA, PART I: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF LANDSCAPE ACROSS THREE CONTINENTS

Gardens come into being, but they do so in an existing landscape, both physical and cultural. To understand how Villa Vizcaya came to be an Italian garden set in Miami, Florida in the early 20th century, we need to outline the social and cultural histories that set the canvas for Suarez. To do so, I will briefly lay out the history of the Italian garden, followed by the state of landscaping architecture and the garden design schemas across the three continents which came together in Vizcaya: Europe (especially Italy), South America, and the United States.

The Italian Garden

> Culture is defined by persisting symbols, some of which are in the landscape. Once a landscape acquires meaning for a cultural group, that group will seek to perpetuate that symbolic landscape as a means of self-preservation.

Gardening is one of humankind's oldest traditions. It has been a source of fascination for millennia. Gardens have been used through history as metaphors of pleasure, meditation, wonder, and as showcases of power and ingenuity. They are mentioned as far back as the Old Testament with the Garden of Eden.

European gardens exercised intense fascination upon Americans. In particular, between 1890 and 1940, the Italian garden would become one of the most significant influences on the designed landscape in the United States. Brent Elliot has called it "an international interest in the gardens of the Renaissance that began in the 1880's with Tuckermann's Gartenkunst ser Italienischen Renaissance-Zeitgeist.[1]

[1] Tuckermann, W.P.. 2008. *Die Gartenkunst der Italienischen Renaissance-zeit.* Charleston. BiblioBazaar.

Where did the Italian garden originate? The art of gardening spread from Egypt to other areas. In 1500 BC, a separate civilization had emerged a thousand miles away in a landscape beyond the Arabian desert and surrounding the Euphrates River. Occupied by the Assyrians, this dry and warm land with high mountains and forests gave special character to the gardens made here. Probably due to the mountain environment, the Assyrians were more interested in terraces than were the Egyptians. The reputation of gardens was so great that the Assyrians introduced a symbolic mount in their gardens and created an example of this art form as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world: The Hanging Gardens of Babylon. According to John and Ray Oldman, legend has it that they were built for one of the Kings consorts who, coming from a mountainous land, wearied of the flat plain and longed for a garden which would remind her of her own country.[2] This fascination with gardening is associated with the pleasurable enjoyment of nature and this taming and manipulating of the natural world represents a fundamental aspect of the nature of gardens.

The Persians succeeded the Assyrians in 559 BC. Xenophon, the Greek historian who saw the Persian parks on his travels, described the way they were laid out through the medium of Socrates: "*Everywhere the Persian King is zealously cared for, so that he may find gardens wherever he goes; their name is Paradise and they are full of things fair and good that the earth can bring forth...*". Persian palaces were built upon a series of raised platforms and this configuration led to an important development in

[2] Oldham, John and Ray. 1980. *Gardens in Time*. Sydney. Landsdowne Press.P.22.

planning: the introduction of wide steps between levels replacing the long, cumbersome ramps used by the Egyptians.[3]

The Islamic gardens built during the Delhi Sultanate inspired the Mughal gardens that succeeded them. The name Mughal derives from the word Mongol. Cascades, water-ladders and water-stairways were among the important garden elements both in the later Mughal gardens and in those of the Renaissance.

Greek gardens were laid out with cold precision: like their Egyptian counterparts, they were a combination of the utilitarian and the decorative, and they kept to the classic severity of the architecture they surrounded. The Romans, too, would enjoy and develop their gardens, which in turn, derived from the Greeks.

The Italian nobles had their villas in the surrounding hillsides. The topography required terraces that were cut at first as a necessity to prevent washouts on the steep slopes. They would soon be cleverly-designed as a feature with steps and balustrades not only for convenience and safety, but because the Romans entered their homes through their gardens. As such, the garden would finally be recognized as an outdoor living room, thereby moving the agrarian features such as vegetable gardens, fruit grove and vineyards to a distant part of the estate.

The purely architectural design principles that ruled the house were applied to the gardens surrounding it, before they disappeared into the agricultural lands. The same decorative elements that the Romans had inside their villa -- sculptures, vases, seats, etc., -- were also taken to the outdoors. The fall of Rome would leave gardening dormant until a renewed prosperity came to Italy: the Renaissance, brought about the

[3] Ibid. P. 114.

revival of classical learning and increased attention to the physical human individual. Into this context entered the new mercantile and financial aristocracy that arose with the extraordinary increase of trade in the closing years of the Middle Ages. As feudalism died out, the newly rich families replaced feudal lords and swept to enormous power, losing and gaining again control of the guilds and the *Signoria*[4] in Florence.

The Medici institutionalized the use of gardens to demonstrate their authority and splendor. This splendor came to be perceived as a princely virtue spurring the creation of what became known as the Italian garden. As Eric Orsena[5] described the Golden Age, architects, sculptors, painters, poets, historians and humanist scholars throughout Italy were engaged in producing a magnificent image for their powerful patrons. The garden was a form of political theater, presenting the power, wisdom, order, beauty and glory that the Medici and other powerful merchant or religious families had brought to Florence and Rome.

This group of artists looked back at their Roman predecessor's ancestors for inspiration in all the arts and the classic garden was rediscovered with acclaim. At the hands of some of the greatest artists of all time and under the patronage of the Medici and other ruling families, artists such as a Michelangelo and Raphael gave gardens a fresh air and freedom of expression not yet known. Like the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans before them, they knew the importance of adapting the garden to the lines of the house it joined.

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[4] The *Signoria* was the government of Medieval and Renaissance *Florence*. Its nine members, were chosen from the ranks of the guilds of the city.

[5] Orsenna, Erik. 2001. *Andre Le Notre: Gardener of the Sun King.* New York: George Braziller.

The importance of the Italian Villa, historically and to a degree technically, rests upon the obvious fact that house and grounds were designed as a single entity. The completeness of the visual tie that exists between indoor and outdoor space is innovative and represents a conscious attempt to tie the indoor and outdoor space together into a unified structure carefully fitted to the site.[6]

Bramante was the first to design a garden using a central axis to control the layout of both house and garden, thus integrating a series of enclosed spaces at different levels thereby maximizing the use of the terrain. Flights of steps, niches and fountains were disposed in relation to the axis and embellished with statues, fountains, terracotta pots holding fruit trees.[7] It was during this time, that the Florence Academy of Art (*Accademia Delle Belli Arti di Firenze*) was founded.Diego Suarez would later be trained as an architect in this same institution.

Two centuries later, grand showplaces were built that required a new style of garden, one that was open and expansive, and which would emulate the palaces of Rome and Tuscany; these were the French chateaux, especially those in the Loire Valley. Symmetry was *de rigueur* with an imposing central axis running between perfectly balanced parterres graced with broderies, mazes, topiaries and intimate green rooms. Cartesian principles ruled the design of the day. Mathematics, perspectives and astronomy were also part of the design of the gardens. This approach reached its apogee with Andre Le Notre, whose masterpieces at Versailles, Vaux-le-Vicomte and Marly-le-Roi became legendary.

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[6] Newton, Norman. 1971. *Design on The Land.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[7] Ibid.

But as rationalism gave way to romanticism, rigid geometry was replaced by softer landscapes reflecting the wilderness of nature. Classic gardens were forgotten until the early twentieth century when several of the French historic properties including Vaux-le-Vicomte were restored according to original plans. For this task, the owner would employ the French landscape architect, Henri Duchene, and his son Achilles Duchene.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, there was no university education to become an "architect" as we understand the term today. The design of buildings was carried out either by gifted builders or carpenters with access to European (likely British) published style books and pattern books or gentlemen amateurs who cultivated their refined taste, studied the classics and designed homes for themselves, their friends and social equals. Architecture was an unpaid interest. America's third president, Thomas Jefferson[8], is a classic example, but there were many others.

Long before the establishment of schools, the training of architects consisted mainly in learning how to draw. Later, when schools were formed, the study of history, arithmetic and geometry was added to the curriculum.[9] From the end of the 17th century in Europe, the new-classical school and the adoption of universal criteria or the drawing of plans and surveys was led by two individuals: Gian Battista Piranesi (1720-1778) in Italy and Gaspard Monge (1746-1818) in France. During the Renaissance, the Vitruvian Academy and the *Accademia di Belli Arte* in Florence began to make a detailed

[8] Howard, Hugh. 2015. *Thomas Jefferson: The Built Legacy of Our Third President*. Rizzoli Classics. New York.

[9] Gazzola, Pietro. 1975. *The Training of Architect-Restorers.* ICOMOS.General Assembly and International Symposium. Verona. Retrieved October 2014. https://www.icomos.org/monumentum/vol3/vol3_2.pdf

examination of the classical buildings discovered in the excavations carried out in Rome as part of the architectural curriculum.

Italy: The Florence Academy of Art

The Florence Academy of Art is one of the oldest and most outstanding institutions in the world.[10] *La Accademia*, or the Academy, as it is called, dates to the early 14th century at the beginning of the Renaissance. It developed out of the guild system composed of master craftsmen who were experienced and confirmed experts in the field of handicraft. They were required to complete a program of schooling, first trained as an apprentice under the clear and generously-bestowed guidance of the master craftsmen. Apprentices would typically take part in the intense artistic activity of the master's shop.

Before the middle of the 15th century however, a wave of Platonism reached Italy from Byzantium. It was brought by Greek émigré scholars, particularly Plethon and Bessarion. They brought with them the original dialogues of Plato. Initially, the dialogues inclined contemporaries to accept the interpretation that these dialogues had in the East, namely, a neo-platonic, mystical and irrational interpretation combined with hermetical constructions. It was in this form of learning that was accepted by the great Renaissance center of Platonism, The Florence Academy of the 15th century.[11]

Throughout the centuries, the *Accademia Delle Belli Arti* continued to be one of the premier learning and teaching institutions in Europe. It produced some of history's most renowned artists and architects. The three main courses offered at the Academy

[10] Cozi, Carlo. 2012. Descrizione Dell'ie. E Re. Accademia Delle Belle Arti Di Firenze. Nabu Press. Retrieved from: https://outlook.live.com/owa/?path=/mail/inbox on Nov. 3, 2015.

[11] Ibid.

were painting, sculpture and architecture. The latter developed into an experimental studio that attracted some of the nation's best creative minds. Michelangelo Buonarotti (1475-1564) and Galileo Galileo (1564-1642) were among its renowned members. Continuing the tradition fostered by the Medici's[12], scholars learned the rules, proportions and measurements of the ancient orders of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns and entablatures. Jacob Burckhart summed this training up as follows:

> The true aspiration of the Renaissance Architect, was to design a building simply for the beauty of its proportions, the spaciousness of its interior and the imposing grandeur of its ensemble. . . they craved for a perfect symmetry and regularity such as they could not achieve while concentrating merely on the practical requirements of an ordinary building.[13]

France: The Ecole des Beaux Arts

What was eventually to become the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris was founded in 1671 as the *Academie Royal d' Architecture*, one of a series of academies created during the reign of Louis XIV to train French artists. The idea came from Cardinal Mazarino (1602-1661), the King's Italian religious leader, and was to be modelled after the *Accademia* in Florence. In addition to training students, the *Academie* was the meeting place for French architects, who advised Louis XIV on the design of important buildings and held theoretical discussions on architecture.[14]

The *Academie* had great influence over European architecture. Much like its counterpart in Florence, it introduced scholarly debate on theories of architecture. Its

[12] The Medici's were the leading merchant Florentine family who during the Renaissance fostered and supported the arts.

[13] Burckhardt, Jacob.1942. *La Cultura del Renacimiento en Italia.* Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada.

[14] Chafee, Richard.1977. The Teaching at The Ecole de Beaux-Arts. In *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts,* (ed) Aurthur Drexler, 85. New York and Cambridge: The Museum of Modern Art and MIT Press.

goal was to elevate architects from the rank of master artist to that of theorist. Towards the end of the Nineteenth century, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte III unified the Academies of Architecture, Art and Sculpture into one, renaming it the *Ecole Superieur des Beaux Arts.*[15] These institutions shared a building but maintained separate faculties. Centrally located in Paris, the *Ecole* remained France's only architecture school until the student riots of 1968[16] when it finally closed.

At a time when acquiring a professional education in architecture in the United States was not possible, American students were especially attracted to the *Ecole*. Classical architecture was considered a sign of cultivation and the *Ecole* trained its students to design by imitating the styles of the past, mainly Greek and Roman landmarks of antiquity.

Hundreds of applicants applied to take the five-part entrance exam which was a mark of the school's prestige but only sixty students were admitted each term: forty-five French and fifteen foreign. Students were taught six courses that included philosophy, mathematics, geometry, painting, sculpture, and history.[17]

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[15] Ecole des Beaux-Arts. While the term originates with the National School of Fine Arts in Paris, it also refers to a school of thought in landscape architecture and in architecture that was practiced and taught primarily between 1893 and 1929 (between the Chicago Columbian Exposition and the Great Depression.) Landscape designs reflecting the Ecole des Beaux-Arts tradition revived older styles from Ancient Greece and Rome, Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque era Europe. These styles could be mixed within one design as well.

[16] May 1968 had an impact on French society that resounded for decades afterward. It is considered to this day as a cultural, social and moral turning point in the history of the country. As Alain Geismar—one of the leaders of the time—later pointed out, the movement succeeded “as a social revolution, not as a political one”. Erlanger, Steven (29 April 2008). "May 1968 - a watershed in French life". *New York Times*. Retrieved 31 February 2018.

[17] Chafee, Richard. 1977. The Teaching at The Ecole de Beaux-Arts. In *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, (ed) Aurthur Drexler. New York and Cambridge: The Museum of Modern Art and MIT Press.P. 61-68.

Students followed a prescribed course of instruction at the *Ecole*. They first enrolled as an *aspirant* to prepare for the school's entrance exams. Foreign students were admitted with a letter from their ambassadors. This requisite alone required that the student be well connected socially and or politically in their country of origin. The *aspirant* took examinations in mathematics, descriptive geometry, history, and a practical exercise in drawing, both of an architectural design and of a classical statue. He also aligned himself with an *atelier*, a drawing studio presided over by the *Maitre* or *patron*: a master Architect usually approved by the *Ecole*. Entrance to each of the *ateliers* was competitive.

Upon completion of the entrance examinations and formal acceptance to the *Ecole*, the student became a member of the second class and attended lectures. These included history and theory of architecture, construction, perspective, mathematics, physics, chemistry, descriptive geometry, building law, general history, and French architecture.

Much of the actual learning occurred in the ateliers, where under the tutelage of the *Maitre* and in contact with fellow students, the student learned the craft of architectural drawing and design. The *Maitre* might appear once a week for a period of formal criticism, but for most of the time, the students worked amongst themselves and taught each other. The ateliers were noted for their bohemian, slightly seedy surroundings and for the loyalty which they engendered among their members.

The Ecole taught its students to follow a specific design process that encouraged them to think rapidly, drawing on a knowledge of architectural styles and the specific requirements for the type of building being designed. Often using a soft pencil or pastel,

the student made the *partí*, a preliminary sketch in which he defined the problem and its solution for it.

In addition, the Ecole conducted the *concours:*[18] a series of formal competitive exercises in which the student was required to prepare a design based on a stated theme, called the program. The student would be given specific information, including the type of building commissioned, the size and shape of the proposed site, and the nature of the client, and he was given twelve hours to prepare a *parti* or concept. Richard Chaffee (1977) described this process as follows:

> The student would sign his name in the book of registrations for the *concours* and would receive a copy of the program. He then went into a small cubicle -- in French, it is said the student went '*en loge*' -- and there he had twelve hours to study the program, and if he wished to draw a small preliminary sketch recording the essential form of his architectural design. All the students *en loge* for a *concours* could talk together but no one else could join them. . . if a student wished to take part in a *concours*, he would, when he left the building give the sketch to the guard, who acknowledged receipt in the registration book. Once out, the student could not return. He would take a tracing of his sketch back to his atelier, where, with the criticism of his patron he would develop his idea. Ultimately, if the student wanted to, he would prepare drawings for submission on an appointed date to the school for judgement. The jury compared each student's preliminary sketch with his final entry, for the two had to reflect the same idea.[19]

The *concours* were the primary source of advancement for the student. A jury would award him points for the final design and when the student had accumulated enough of them, usually after two or four years, he advanced to the First class, where lectures at the Ecole continued and a new set of *concours* began. Upon completion of

[18] The concours is what in modern day times is called an ‘architectural competition’.

[19] Chafee, Richard. 1977. *The Teaching at The Ecole de Beaux-Arts*. In The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, (ed) Aurthur Drexler, 85. New York and Cambridge: The Museum of Modern Art and MIT Press.

his work in the First Class, the student received his diploma. Focus was placed on honing drawing and painting skills to create richly-detailed renderings, mainly in ink and watercolor that would awe the viewer.

In addition to *concours* in design, there were also competitions in construction, in which the student was required to demonstrate how a building was constructed and to prepare the mathematical equations necessary to show that the building could stand. By 1900 there were also *concours* in the history of architecture and in modeling from classical statuary and the human figure. The most sought-out prize was the Prix de Rome or Rome Prize: a scholarship to study abroad in what was considered then, the fountainhead of classism. The Ecole viewed classicism as the eternal truth of architecture.

Richard Guy Wilson (1979) has called Beaux-Arts architecture a "coherent, rational process", which was a combination of artistic talent and learned design process. In addition, he said:

> Architecture, properly speaking, was a monumental art and drew upon the tradition of the past. Knowledge of history was essential; hence, not only courses and books but also detailed studies of building and ornament became necessary. Informing the present were brilliantly rendered interpretations of antiquity. The result of this close analysis of the past was that prototypical buildings and elements were recognized. Both entire buildings and fragments of buildings -- domes, columns, windows, attics and moldings --were part of the vocabulary of design. A third element of the order was that the style possessed a recognizable grammar that could be manipulated. The usage of different styles depended upon circumstances of location, material, program, and client. Most schools taught many styles; Gothic, Byzantine, Islamic, and Romanesque were among those recognized, but classism of the Roman, French, or Italian variety dominated. . . a fourth element of architectural order was the

> formal compositional rules such as axis, symmetry, the golden section, and mass.[20]

Towards the end of the eighteenth century and beginning in the nineteenth, the study of architecture began to transform itself with the emergence of the first schools of architecture. Until then, it had concentrated on the acquisition of factual knowledge through historical research. The creation of new polytechnic schools in the first half of the eighteenth century brought about a reorganization of the teaching in the schools of architecture. Architectural surveying and an emphasis on the study of history and mathematics were required at the beginning of the training. Students received classical training, teaching them to draw inspiration from the monuments of the past.

In addition to the *Accademia* in Florence and the *Ecole* in Paris, the creation of new polytechnic schools of an entirely different character emerged in other European cities. The higher Polytechnic Schools in Prague (1806), Vienna (1816), and Karlsruhe (1826) evolved with the introduction of the art of draughtsmanship, axonometric, perspective and the theory of shadows.

With regards to the development of architectural training schools, the realization that architecture is both an art and a science was reflected in the nineteenth century in the emergence of various national traditions and systems in the teaching of architecture. In countries with an ancient academic tradition, like France, where a distinction between architecture and engineering had been made at an early stage, the school of architecture constituted a special section of the Ecole. In the Germanic countries, where higher schools of engineering had been established at a very early date, architecture

[20] Wilson, Richard Guy. 1979. *Architecture, Landscape and City Planning*. In The American Renaissance: 1876-1917. Brooklyn, New York: The Brooklyn Museum. P. 92.

was taught in a special section of the polytechnic schools. In Italy, a mixed system developed, reflecting both the continuing prestige of the Academy and also the polytechnic tradition, originating with the so-called *'scuola d'applicazione*' (advanced technical schools for officers or graduates in engineering) and the higher technical institutes.[21]

In France, as already stated, the architecture students of the Ecole supplemented their studies by working in the office or the atelier of a "master architect". In Russia, students attended their courses in the Fine Arts Academy and were then sent abroad to complete their studies. In Belgium, architecture was taught in the architecture department of the Academy and students were required to do practical work in an architect's office. The same kind of apprenticeship existed in Austria where academic courses in architecture were given in a special department of the Polytechnic school in Vienna, the departments of the Academies and the vocational schools attached thereto.[22]

In Germany, various polytechnic schools provided five-year courses in architecture since the end of the nineteenth Century, and in addition students were required to do practical work in an architect's office. Switzerland also followed the German tradition with architecture being taught in the polytechnic schools. Sweden has two polytechnic schools where students could qualify as teachers of architecture after a four-year course: those who wished to practice as professional architects went on to

[21] Gazzola, Pietro. 1975. *The Training of Architect-Restorers*. ICOMOS.General Assembly and International Symposium. Verona.Retrieved October 2014. https://www.icomos.org/monumentum/vol3/vol3_2.pdf

[22] Ibid.

complete their studies in the department of architecture attached to the Fine Arts Academy.[23]

History of Latin American Landscape Architecture

> By the turn of the XIX century, Latin America was independent from Spanish rule but continued to be, at that time, strongly linked to Europe by reason of race, heritage and tradition. Their relations with the United States were comparatively un-important. At the time, most Latin Americans were unconcerned by what happened in the United States and fairly ignorant of the tremendous development which was rapidly taking shape in the northern section of the hemisphere. The same thing could have been said of most Americans, too busy with their own frontiers to be unduly interested in what happened in the rest of the continent.[24]

Latin America extends for a continent and a half, comparable to all of Europe and Anglo-Saxon North America combined. It includes very large areas of high mountains, deserts and jungles. Until well into the twentieth century one of the principal characteristics of Latin America was its remoteness, not only from the rest of the Western world but also from itself. Another factor characteristic throughout the region was that independence came gradually across nearly a century, and rather than unity, it brought greater separation. There was no general Civil War, nor was there a transcontinental railroad system that united the different republics. Horse and ship, ocean liner or river boat, remained the principal means of communications until the coming of the airplane.

It is necessary to distinguish two very different colonies: the Spanish and the Portuguese. In the Spanish colonies, three distinctly different cultural regions were imposed quickly: a) the Caribbean, a sort of "Mediterranean Sea of America" where the

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Suarez, Diego.1952. *The Pan-American Highway and Inter-American Relations*. New York: Colombian Diplomatic Mission United Nations.

conquerors first arrived; b) the whole of Central America, from California to Panama; c) all South America to the exclusion of Brazil. Each of these regions would develop at a different pace.

Many aspects of Latin American culture can be traced directly back to Spain and the genocide of native civilizations. The Spaniards imposed Catholicism and the feudal encomienda[25] systems that favored the European-born whites. They brought African slaves and implanted a caste system. This mix of Europeans, Africans and Amerindians created new ethnic categories according to their inter-racial group. It also created a mixture of cultures that became uniquely Latin American. Although the Spanish influence prevailed throughout the continent, particularly in architecture, music, religion and language, each country was enriched by their own influence of Europeans, Indians and Africans.

During this time, France was the only country in Europe that was a Republic. All others were monarchies and thus, Latin American countries whose revolutionary movements had gained their independence from the Spanish crown would quickly shift their attention from Spain to France.[26]

Wealthy Latin Americans began sending their children to study in France rather than continue to be educated in Catholic Spanish institutions in their respective countries. French influence began to be seen in architecture, literature, cuisine, fashion,

[25] Encomienda was a labor system in Spain and its empire. It rewarded conquerors with the labor of groups of subject people. It was first established in Spain during the Roman period but used also following the Christian conquest of Muslim territories. It was applied on a much larger scale during the Spanish colonization of the Americas.

[26] Pavony, German Rodrigo Mejia. 2000. *Los años del cambio: Historia Urbana de Bogota, 1820-1910.* Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.

and even in the democratic structure of the institutions where all Latin American countries modeled their judicial system after the Napoleonic law that endures to this day.[27]

Architecture too was transformed. The Spanish colonial style that had prevailed for centuries was replaced by classical structures inspired by the Beaux Arts movement in France.[28]

The nineteenth and early twentieth-century architects of Latin America have been less-studied than their pre-historic and colonial ancestors.[29] French influence dominated the arts in Mexico from the time of Maximilian with Napoleon III's backing initiated a sort of Second Empire there in the mid-nineteenth century.[30] This Second Empire mode lasted until 1900 in the rest of Latin America. The dictates of official French taste in architecture were dominant in Latin America and many projects built in the southern capitals were produced from Paris ateliers.

Hitchcock (1955) claims that until the mid-twentieth century, Latin America had not produced a Frank Lloyd Wright, a Perret, or a Behrens.[31] He goes on to state that

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Arango, Silvia. 1985. *La Arquitectura en Colombia.* Bogota: Escala Editores.

[29] Hitchcock, Henry Russel. 1955. *Latin American Architecture since 1945.* New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

[30] Maximilian I (1832 –1867) was the only monarch of the Second Mexican Empire. In an alliance Napoleon organized in 1861, troops from Britain, Spain and France landed at Veracruz in Mexico to demand payment of the government's debts, but when the British and the Spanish realized that the French meant to conquer Mexico they left. French reinforcements arrived and launched a civil war, which is thought in the end to have cost some 50,000 lives. They drove Juarez and his people out of Mexico City in 1863 and further victories followed.

[31] Auguste Perret (1874 –1954) was a French architect and entrepreneur who worked in collaboration with his two younger brothers, Claude and Gustave Perret. He was one of the pioneers of the architectural use of reinforced concrete, and built the first residential buildings with that material. His major works include the Théatre des Champs-Élysées, the first Art Deco building in Paris; the Church of Notre-Dame du Raincy (1922–23); the Mobilier Nationale in Paris (1937) He was accepted in the

most of the Latin American architects were products of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* or, of the local schools they established upon their return from France. Most universities in Latin America established architecture degrees after the 1920's.[32]

The French academic influence of the École des Beaux Arts continued for the first two decades of the 20th century. While the schools of architecture adopted its academic form, the major Latin American cities such as Mexico, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile and Montevideo aspired to resemble Paris (including hiring French architects) and its architecture took the cosmopolitan appeal that immigrants from different countries brought to the city. However, anti-academic manifestations such as the *art-nouveau*, Italian *liberty* and the Catalan *modernism* also sprung about in these new capitals.[33] The model included the transformation of lifestyles and a rapid process of urbanization where the opening of avenues, tree-lined streets and the creation of parks

architecture course of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, along with his two brothers, Gustave (1876-1952) and Claude (1880-1960). where he studied under Julien Guadet, a Beaux Arts neoclassicist who had collaborated with Charles Garnier on the construction of the Paris Opera. Beyond the neoclassical rationalism he learned from Gaudet, Perret's particular interest was the structure of buildings and the use of new materials, such as concrete. Peter Behrens was one of the leaders of architectural reform at the turn of the century and was a major designer of factories and office buildings in brick, steel and glass. From 1907 to 1912, he had students and assistants, and among them were Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Adolf Meyer, Jean Kramer and Walter Gropius (later to become the first director of the Bauhaus).

[32] Hitchcock, Henry Russel. 1955. *Latin American Architecture since 1945.* New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

[33] Art Nouveau is an international style of art, architecture and applied art, especially the decorative arts, that was most popular between 1890 and 1910. A reaction to the academic art of the 19th century, it was inspired by natural forms and structures, particularly the curved lines of plants and flowers. English uses the French name Art Nouveau (new art). The style is related to, but not identical with, styles that emerged in many countries in Europe at about the same time: in Austria it is known as *Secessionsstil* after *Wiener Secession*; in Spanish *Modernismo*; in Catalan *Modernisme*; in Czech *Secese*; in Danish *Skønvirke* or *Jugendstil*; in German *Jugendstil*, Art Nouveau or *Reformstil*; in Hungarian *Szecesszió*; in Italian Art Nouveau, *Stile Liberty* or *Stile floreale*; In *Italy* the movement was called "*Liberty*" for the firm *Liberty* and Company in London's Regent Street, which sold this kind of art for several decades. In architecture and painting the Art Nouveau movement took different forms in different countries, so the *style* varied from London to Paris to New York.

meant notable changes. Urban proposals for faster traffic, achieved with diagonal avenues, would modify the old Spanish colonial trace.[34]

The criteria of a "building aesthetic" based on large public buildings standing in the terminus of these grand avenues, would lead to the hiring of foreigners to design the public buildings and legislative palaces in Mexico, Buenos Aires, La Plata, and Montevideo. However, this Euro-centric model would come to an end because of the first World War when European civilization began to blur in the context of the war. Coincidentally, the field of literature had raised the need for an introspective look at Latin America, having among the visible heads of this Latin American movement José Martí, José Enrique Rodó,[35] Rubén Dario and Ricardo Rojas. This circumstance would

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[34] Buschiazzo, Mario. 1961. *Historia de la Arquitectura IberoAmericana.* Buenos Aires: Emece.

[35] Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó's essay *Ariel* published in 1900 is one of the most influential in the field of Latin American culture and politics. It is a brief text composed of six parts and characterized by its philosophical content and pedagogical tone. It is mainly aimed at the Latin American youth, as the author says, to warn them against utilitarianism and what he calls "nordomania". He borrows the characters of *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare: Prospero, Ariel and Caliban.The circumstances that were happening on the American continent at this time, prompted Rodo to warn of the negative effects of utilitarianism on the Latin American spirit, because, according to him, it was mainly based on materialism. Because of this, so the American continent could recover its spiritual values, it was necessary to follow the aesthetic ideals of the culture of classical Greece, as model of good taste by its use of art as a mental activity which enriches the spirit. Likewise, it is worth noting that it also regards Christianity as a source of idealism. Thus, said Rodo, Latin American countries should defend themselves from U.S. cultural domination through spiritual idealism. In addition, Rodo claimed that the responsibility of young people resided in preserving a civilization of Greek origin. Likewise, the author denounces the "nordomania" because it provides ideas foreign to the Hispanic spirit and fearing imperialism given that the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898 and the United States began to impose a form of continental hegemony. The author insists on the role of young people to create their own identity and regional culture without being affected by outside influences. Likewise, Rodo proposes not to pursue the US as a model of democracy for its utilitarian nature, as opposed to the democratic spirit. Democracy, according to Rodo,is achieved through the education of the people and is based on social equality and access for all to all branches of knowledge. A Democratic Government should be made up of morally and intellectually educated beings. About (both the intellectual and cultural) independence of Latin America, the critic Jon Beasley-Murray, in his article "The Intellectual and the State: modernism and Transculturation from Below", writes: "*For Rodó, as much as for Marti, The Latin American state has to be constituted from and by Latin America, rather than imposed from above. Indeed, it is this "irreplaceable" constitutive power that marks Latin America's distinction from Europe: it is precisely because Latin America has shown its revolutionary power that the region can now inherit the mantle of Western civilization that a decadent Europe, constrained by the remnants of its aristocratic tradition, is losing.*" The ideological stream that emerged from Ariel was called Arielismo.

determine a change that was based on deep social and political motives that had as emerging testimony to the agrarian revolution in Mexico, the rise of an urban middle-class (many of them who were children of immigrants) in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, a strong indigenous current in the Andean region and growing social upheavals in almost all countries. Most of colonial architectural works belong to the 18th century. Since the mid of the 17th century, the Baroque style took force in Latin America especially in the territories of Mexico and Guatemala and in the Peruvian towns of Cuzco and Lima.[36]

On the other hand, there is the urbanism that arises because of the arrival of the *conquistadors*. The urban work of the Spanish and the Portuguese arriving in America was developed at several levels: the settlement of colonists in the existing cities and new foundation, the doctrinal work and the defense of their trade. The city model adopted in the new world was the European Baroque style, where the city was conceived as a symbol of the absolute power of Kings and was structured around a center consisting of a large square, the *plaza mayor*, and was distributed in blocks and wide streets of layout in a grid. On this basis, the colonists adapted for their purposes large indigenous nuclei and founded new ones.

Also, the concern for trade security was manifested in the planning of coastal cities, all of them built with a defensive character following the tradition of military fortifications. Havana, Cartagena de India's, San Juan de Puerto Rico and Veracruz, among others, counted on ramparts and castles prepared for the defense.

[36] Buschiazzo, Mario. 1961*. Historia de la Arquitectura IberoAmericana.* Buenos Aires: Emece.

Gardens in Colombia (1890 – 1930)

"*The Haciendas of the Savannah of Bogotá represent the garden of Colombia*"
German Tellez 'Jardines de Colombia'

"*The decline and final disintegration of the Spanish Empire in the American Continent during the early years of the nineteenth century and the dawn of a new era of the newly-born republics of the Western Hemisphere, constitute one of the most important events in the history of the modern world.*"
Diego Suarez, '*Twilight of an Empire*'

In 1810, after centuries of Spanish rule and occupation, Simon Bolivar (1783-1830), and other 'revolutionaries' declared victory from Spain on July 20th, giving birth to the Republic of Gran Colombia (Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela). Despite the political transformations during the years preceding the Republic, hardly any changes are reflected in domestic architecture. The most visible change becomes the enclosed protruding balconies on the facades built of wood framed with glass. The architecture continued to be dominated by the Spanish patio or cloister.[37]

Bogota, the capital of Colombia, is in the vast Savannah of Bogota, 2600 meters above sea level in the middle of the Andes Mountains. For the first time, after the creation of the Republic, *haciendas* begin to incorporate the surrounding landscape into the house. The open Spanish patio remains as a controlled space but a new element, a surrounding '*loggia*'[38] is introduced around the house. This corridor or veranda becomes

[37] Arango, Silvia. 1985. *La Arquitectura en Colombia.* Bogota: Escala Editores.

[38] A loggia in Italy is a gallery or arcade open to the air on at least one side. A space within the body of the building serving as an open-air corridor, an outdoor room, an entrance porch or a terrace. In Spanish it is called a *veranda.*

a lookout towards the landscape and gardens begin to emerge closer to the house and symmetry is introduced in the plans.[39]

The architecture adopted the latest European fashions. Neo-classic, neo-gothic and neo-Moorish arrive in Colombia with a more contemporary look. As in all situations with accelerated assimilation, the Colombian process is full of paradoxes. Eclectic gestures from all styles are added to the classical Academic styles, making it impossible to classify any one stylistic movement. Although architecture is received through international images, its dynamic influences are purely local. Emerging fashions, climate and culture provide a distinct character to each region. In the 1910's and 1920's, Colombian cities changed their face: there was virtually no facade undecorated or any space left un- embellished. The economic prosperity of the State and private capital enabled the impulse of architecture and with it came the creation of gardens.[40]

The private house adjusts to the new urban conditions with a succession of space around two courtyards, one ornamental and another for service. The same basic house serves for all social classes. It varies only in its dimensions and the degree of development of the façade: the skin becomes the face that conveys the social status of its dwellers. The so called "*quintas*" or villas, which were originally built as summer houses, become permanent residences. The courtyard disappears: the residence is surrounded by the gardens.[41]

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[39] Tellez, German. 1997. *Casa de Hacienda: Arquitectura en el Campo Colombiano*. Bogota: Villegas Editores.

[40] Robledo, Alfonso and Uribe, Claudia. 2005. *Jardines de Colombia*. Bogotá. Villegas Editores.

[41] Ibid.

Education in Colombia

The nation of Colombia became a constitutional Republic in 1832. The population of Bogotá, its capital, began to change as it grew in number of inhabitants and area. From the first residents of the city and their descendants, an elite class came into being that was characterized by a high style of living and an interest in influencing policy through political participation. A nascent bourgeoisie and a materialistic middle class began to develop during the second half of the 19th century after the establishment of the Republic. This new class of residents made the city their own and worked hard to convert it into the undisputed core of government and institutions. They were also determined to make it the national cradle of the arts and letters and to promoting various commercial and productive businesses. A 'Europization' of Bogota occurred during this period when certain European customs were adopted by this new middle class to emphatically differentiate themselves from the so-called 'masses'.[42]

It was at this time that a new and refined type of *Bogotanean* emerged as symbolic of the Colombian aristocracy of the 19th century. Education, that during colonial times (1500 - 1820) was solely in the hands of religious communities, found a greater pluralism in the 19th century and new non-clerical institutions emerged. Education, however, was a privilege to which only the wealthy could aspire. This resulted in a high level of illiteracy because there were not enough elementary schools to serve the population. The wealthiest families sent their youth on grand tours through Europe, to complete their educations in London and Paris.[43] They returned to Bogota

[42] *Masses* is the name given to a body of common people of low economic status.

[43] Santos, Enrique. 1992. *El Corazon del Poeta.* Bogota: Nuevo Mundo Editores.

with a preference for the finest goods and habits, further enhancing the European culture in Bogota. Eventually, new educational centers in Colombia were established that began to influence the political scene. Both the National University, founded in 1867, and the Externado de Colombia, the first secular private university of the country, founded in 1886, were established by General Francisco de Paula Santander, Suarez's ancestor, but neither offered professional education in Architecture.

Landscape Architecture in America

The history of landscape architecture in the 20th century has a well-known trajectory established in such key texts as: *Italian Gardens*[44], *Italian Villas and their Gardens*[45], *Design on the Land*[46] and *Landscape Design: A cultural and architectural history*[47] among others. I present a summary of this history here for the purposes of outlining the background for Diego Suarez's own education and professional development.

The early 20th century in America saw the gap between the rich and the poor grow wider. For landscape architects, there was much work creating grandeur estates for the rich in the manner of Beaux-Arts architecture. The City Beautiful Movement, which had started in the 1890's, was also underway. This movement or philosophy encouraged the landscape architect to look at a city not as bits and pieces of architecture, but as a whole entity that should be designed. At Harvard, Charles Eliot

[44] Platt, Charles A. 1894;2000. *Italian Gardens.* Sagaponack, N.Y.: Sagapress Inc.

[45] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008. *Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

[46] Newton, Norman. 1971. *Design on The Land.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[47] Rogers, Elizabeth Barlow. 2001. *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*. New York.Harry N. Abrams.

began the first landscape architecture program in America in 1889, and with it, he aligned the field with design professions rather than with horticulture.[48]

During the Gilded Age (1890-1930) the tradition of social responsibility diminished. Moguls of steel, railroads and banking expressed interest in the work of landscape architects who soon found themselves employed to design these large estates. This diverted, briefly, the traditional attention of the landscape architect from public service to private.[49]

This wave of grand estates would come to a halt with the stock market crash of 1929, followed by the Great Depression and six years of world conflict. The lack of expendable funds by much of the nation would force the profession to redirect its focus from personal properties to large scale regional planning.

European Influence in Design Training in the United States

The Europeans and the South Americans had different yet similar cultural backgrounds; they would influence the aesthetics of American landscape design in different ways and at different times. Bourrassa argued that different culture groups tend to find symbolic meaning in the evaluation of landscape aesthetics based on their own cultural background.

> Culture is defined by persisting symbols, some of which are in the landscape. Once a landscape acquires meaning for a cultural group, that group will seek to perpetuate that symbolic landscape as a means of self-preservation. Aesthetics is a matter of consummatory experiences, and the symbolic landscape provides such experiences for members of the

[48] Alofsin, Anthony. 2002. *The Struggle for Modernism: Architecture, Landscape Architecture and City Planning at Harvard*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

[49] Lawson, S. 1975. *Shifting into relevancy: A report on the ASLAF.* Landscape Architecture Magazine 65, P. 98-101.

> relevant cultural groups. Landscape aesthetics is to define the manner in which different cultural groups find symbolic meaning in the landscape.[50]

Bourassa also wrote that the cultural background of a society affects its landscape aesthetics and landscape aesthetics is interactive with practical life. The Chicago World's Fair of 1893, also known as the Columbian Exposition (to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage to America), marked a turning point in American architecture and it became the precedent force of the Beaux Arts style that spread throughout the country. Charles F. McKim, a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, summed it up in one phrase: "The scale is Roman, and it will have to be sustained."[51] The White City, as the exhibition came to be known, contained imposing Roman style classical buildings set amongst an immense park with lagoons and grand avenues in the Beaux Arts style. It followed the town planning tradition that had emerged in Europe in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, featuring long tree lined streets, axial geometries and long vistas with strategic terminus. These principles of town planning were adapted to the private palace gardens in the form of clipped hedges and parterres.

One central feature was the "crow's foot" which consisted in three or more avenues starting at a single central point and fanning out in different directions to give dynamic vistas through a city. Washington D. C.'s plan created by L'Enfant used this approach which was in total contrast to the naturalistic English Garden tradition.[52]

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[50] Bourassa, Steven. 1991*. The Aesthetics of Landscape.* London and New York. Belhaven Press.P.109.

[51] Moore, Charles. 1929. *The Life and Times of Charles Follen McKimm.* Boston and new York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

[52] Used by Suarez as the solution to the master plan for Vizcaya. Suarez refers to this design solution as ‘The ribs of a fan’. See Statement of fact 1953, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

American Gardens: A Mirror of Society

High society in New York, Boston and Philadelphia was constantly changing as new fortunes were made. Garden making in 1890 was a popular arena for the display of new prosperity; a great estate was intended to resemble a "family seat" with its aura of old money.[53] Equally pertinent to Americans developing interest in Italian gardens was the tremendous renewal of enthusiasm for gardening in general in the United States in the late 19th century, and the growing realization that the garden had a place as one of the fine arts that should be encouraged in American culture.[54]

The 1890's marked the beginning of the greatest period of estate building in America. Architects drew liberally from the Western European Renaissance tradition. By the middle of the decade, with the return of increasing number of architects trained at the *Ecole*, European styles were deployed with greater respect for accuracy. Up until 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, gardens became more structured to complement the new taste for academic domestic architecture. Terraces, axes and cross axes were designed to echo the symmetrical shapes and plans of the houses they adjoined.[55]

Andrew Jackson Downing was the first American to write professionally on landscape architecture and the first American-born landscape architect. His *Treatise on the theory and practice of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America; with a view to the improvement of Country Residences* (1841) espoused the humanistic idea that

[53] Mac Griswold and Eleanor Welle. 1991. *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates 1890-1940.* New York City: Harry N. Abrams. P. 13.

[54] Davidson, Rebecca Warren. 1994. *Images and Ideas of Italian gardens in American Landscape.* Dissertation, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

[55] Ibid.

the making of gardens was a civilized and civilizing activity as well as healthful since human behavior is greatly affected by the environment.[56]

Comparisons drawn between the gardens of Europe and America were widespread: Wilhelm Miller's, *What England Can Teach Us About Gardening* (1911) appeared in both *Country Life in America* and in *The Garden Magazine*. European books on gardening were consulted as often as American ones. There were many regional books also, by climate or by state such as Alice Lounsberry's *Gardens by the Sea* and *Beautiful Homes of Northern New Jersey* (1910).[57]

Still, country estates followed a regular pattern even given regional, climatic, and topographical variation. A long drive was lined with trees, through which parkland, fields, and farm buildings could be glimpsed. The drive ended in a formal court on the entrance front of the house. On the most sheltered side of the house lay a terrace or loggia, which was both a visual for the building and a platform from which to look down at the garden. From here on, hedged or walled enclosures ran down to a naturalistic lawn with trees that connected the house with its surrounding to the wild landscape and the view.[58]

America's Park Movement

The American park movement was born at the end of the 19th century. It was predominantly an American phenomenon.[59] American cities were profoundly affected by

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Laurie, Michael. 1975. *An introduction to Landscape Architecture.* Amsterdam: Elsevier.

the development in 1857 of Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) and Calvert Vaux's (1824-1895) competition winning design for Central Park in New York City. The design was uniquely American. It broke all traditions: it was revolutionary in social response, power and control, layout and organization. Unlike any European model, this was a park for a democratic society, a truly American park.[60]

Olmsted's parks were works of nature adorned with natural water bodies such as lakes, streams, cascades and ponds. They contained natural patches of wilderness and ecologies of the region. Olmsted would go on to design many other parks and be a major influence in the creation of the American landscape movement.[61]

City Beautiful Movement

In 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago brought about a resurgence of the classics. While architects such as Richard Morris Hunt and Charles McKim built great classical pavilions, Olmsted devised the plan and Neoclassism was firmly established as the preferred architectural style.[62] McKim and Hunt were products of the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts,* but it was Olmsted's plan that provided the magic. The lead Chicago architect, Daniel Burnham, would later state in an address that "it was he [Olmsted] who has been our best advisor and our common mentor. An artist, he paints with lakes and wooded slopes, with lawns and banks and forest-covered hills, with mountain sides and ocean views. He should stand where I stand tonight… for what his

[60] Schnadelbach, Terry. 2001. *Feruccio Vitale.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

[61] Martin, Justin. 2011. *Genius of Place.* Boston: Da Capo Press.

[62] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. P. 19.

brain has wrought, and his pen has taught for half a century."[63] The main contribution of the fair was that it represented a total cohesiveness of design a new urban ideal codified in the City Beautiful Movement.

Country Place Era

A new force in American landscape architecture was brought about by the classical style created by architect Daniel Burnham as well as the accompanying classical landscape design by Frederick L. Olmsted for the Chicago Columbian Exposition. It would influence the transformation of American cities, notably Washington D. C. and spur interest in the formal style of gardens that would be created for America's wealthy merchants. In his book, *Italian gardens*[64] Charles Platt, and Edith Wharton in her book *Italian villas and their Gardens* popularized this style amongst America's elite.[65]

In 1888 George W. Vanderbilt built Biltmore in Asheville, N. C., the first truly grand American country house. He selected architect Richard Morris Hunt (1827-95) for the house and Olmsted as the landscape architect. Olmsted would include a formal garden close to the main house in keeping with the French Renaissance style that had been identified by the Vanderbilt's for their estate. A trip to Europe in 1889 to visit chateaus and their grounds would inspire the plans, especially Hunt's suggestion of a front axial vista rising to a hilltop reminiscent of Vaux le Vicomte's designed by Andre Le

[63] Newton, Norman. 1971. *Design on The Land.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[64] Platt, Charles A. 1894;2000*. Italian Gardens.* Sagaponack, N.Y.: Sagapress Inc.

[65] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008*. Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

Notre (1613-1700) near Paris.[66] This important architectural and landscape ensemble would go on to influence the grand scale of development of many of the grand estates that followed, including James Deering's Vizcaya.[67]

The late 19th and early 20th century landscape would be mostly adapted from this French-led Beaux Arts movement during the Country Place Era. It was a style, inspired by the Renaissance and Baroque landscapes of Europe and by the Moorish gardens of Spain. This style would endure into the Great Depression[68], when its exorbitant costs would make this design approach unpopular.

The Gilded Age: The American Renaissance

The years between 1890 and 1915 were an exciting time for the arts and architecture in America when young American architects returning from Paris with a diploma from the Ecole des Beaux Arts would be employed in one of the country's major architectural firms.[69] They were called "Paris Men" by the contemporary architectural

[66] The main difference between the formal garden at Biltmore in Asheville, N.C. and the garden at Vizcaya, in Miami, FL is the existing topography. While at Biltmore Olmsted placed the formal garden in front of an existing hill, at Vizcaya Suarez designed a mound at the end of the garden. In addition, the Biltmore Estate was designed in the French Style with an Italian garden where details or motifs, such as terraces, statuary, evergreens and water were used to create a garden without reference to the overall design of the project. At Biltmore, the Italian garden contains three pools in a formal arrangement and some examples of classical statuary. There is a lack of relationship between the style of the house and the gardens. In contrast, Vizcaya was conceived as an Italian Villa in a coherent design which considers the architecture and the landscape to be one composition. For more on this comparison see Rebecca Warren Davidson.

[67] North Carolina State University. 2017. *Architects & Builders: A Biographical Dictionary.* Retrieved from: http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000278. 2017.

[68] The stock market crash of 1929 followed by the Great depression and six years of world conflict slowed the economy down to a crawl. And forced much of the country into government work programs. Landscape Architects were employed to design roadways and other infrastructure across the country. See S. Lawson, 1975, Shifting into relevancy: A Report on the ASLAF. *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 65, p.98-101.

[69] Along with the students enrolled at the Ecole, there were many who worked at the Ateliers but never enrolled for lectures. They never received a diploma, a fact that did not stop them from advertising themselves as having studied in Paris. Having done so put a person in good standing for employment

press. They were the architects who, through ambition, talent, or family wealth, had gone to Paris and studied at the *Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux Arts*. Their standing in society enabled them to get the most favorable commissions. They would start out as draftsman perfecting their craft and continue their professional development amongst men who had the same training and shared the same design philosophy.

Richard Morris Hunt was the first important American architect to study at the *Ecole*; he finished his studies in 1855 and was followed by several generations of American architects, including: Henry H. Richardson, Louis Sullivan, Charles F. McKim and John M. Carrere, and Thomas Hastings. By the 1880's, Americans composed the largest group of foreign students studying in Paris.[70]

In the following decade, the United States was gaining a sense of itself and of the role it could play as an international power. Instead of adding to the world community, Americans increasingly acknowledged their complete dependence upon European culture. This was seen particularly in the use of various revival styles in decoration and architecture, prompting a discussion about ridding the country of this foreign dependence and establishing a true American style in art and architecture.

This search for an American style was taken up by establishment tastemakers and has come to be called the "American Renaissance". It was a period where the spirit of the Renaissance had great affinity with Americans. Scholars began to disseminate

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both in France and in the United States. Even men who returned without a diploma were sought out by established firms and clients.

[69] Reed, Henry Hope. 1986. *The New York Public Library: Its Architecture and Decoration*. Classical America Series,Norton & Company. P. 20.

[70] Reed, Henry Hope. 1986. *The New York Public Library: It's Architecture and Decoration*, *Classical America Series*, Norton & Company. P. 20.

the ideals of the Italian Renaissance, including its original sources in Greece and Rome. Later, other Renaissance models would be admired such as the French and English models of the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries.

The American Renaissance was very much a search for identity, fueled by nostalgia for the social and architectural decorum of the nation's colonial and republican past, and by a growing belief that America was heir to Western civilization.[71]

The rise of industry created unparalleled wealth and technological achievement in America. As a result, artists and patrons alike sought a visual language for expressing the nation's cultural ascendancy. Because many of the greatest artistic achievements of the Italian Renaissance were sponsored by merchant families, such as the Medici and Strozzi, leaders of America's new industrial society – families like the Vanderbilts, Harrimans, Rockefellers, and Morgans – saw themselves as the appropriate heirs to the classically inspired tradition.

As earlier stated, the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago used classical architecture to assert the nation's claim to cultural leadership. Not content to equal the past, American builders and art patrons sought to surpass it by embracing modern methods and materials, reinventing the built landscape with steel frames and mechanized equipment. These new structures became a metaphor for the country's claim to having established a new "American Renaissance" in architecture and the arts.[72]

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[71] Wilson, Richard Guy. 1979. Architecture, Landscape and City Planning. In *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917*, 92. Brooklyn, New York: The Brooklyn Museum.

[72] The Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century and early 20th century created a new social, economic and culture hungry group of American millionaires that ultimately brought about the design movement known as the American Renaissance. This group of wealthy Americans living in the Midwest and Northeast thought of themselves as the heirs of the great western traditions and looked back to

Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin in their book, *Vizcaya, an American Villa and its Makers*,[73] remind us that towards the end of the 19th century in the United States, industrialization-fueled population growth and urbanization saw the gross national product of the country surge dramatically. Vast fortunes made in shipping, railroads, oil, steel and machinery were concentrated in a few families. For the first time, Americans were amongst the richest people in the world. Rybczynski and Olin go on to state that:

> Uneasily aware as their parvenu status in comparison to titled Europeans, they appropriated many of the trappings and social customs of the Old World… this meant not only opulent city mansions but also palatial estates and winter palaces in the Carolinas and Florida - the Gilded Age was not merely attracted to Europe, it was obsessed with a specific period of European history – the Renaissance.[74]

Harry W. Desmond and Herbert Croly, the authors of *Stately Homes in America*, an influential book published in 1903, explicitly compared self-made American industrialists and businessmen to self-made Quattrocento Florentine merchants and bankers.[75] The new American millionaires looked to the architectural legacy of Europe not as imitators, but as legitimate successors. In his study in American culture, Lewis Mumford would state that these culture seekers wanted to cover up the bleakness of

history in search of a cultural heritage they could identify with. America's wealthy elite – came to express the new American culture – one that modelled itself after the ancient European cultures.

[73] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.P. 5.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Desmond, Harry W. and Croly, Herbert. 2003. *Stately Homes in America*. University Press of the Pacific. Honolulu.

their American heritage and they did so not by cultivating more intensely what they had, but by looting from Europe the finished objects which they lacked.[76]

Joy Wheeler Dow, an architect and writer, succinctly described this desire in his book *American Renaissance:*

> We want to belong somewhere and to something, not be entirely cut off by ourselves as stray atoms." And later, referring to Richard Morris Hunt's Vanderbilt home, Biltmore, he would go on to say: 'we call Biltmore French Renaissance now; it will be American Renaissance later on'.[77]

In its quest for a national identity, the "American Renaissance" sought to revive the original spirit of the American republic, particularly the architectural purity of the new-classical style. The eclectic buildings created during the 1860's and 1870's were dismissed as picturesque and thoroughly lacking in an understanding of architectural styles. They were to be replaced by classical structures based on those of the Italian Renaissance that was now seen as the proper source of inspiration for the American architect. A rigorous and thorough study of these classical forms became the major task.

If this time in American architectural history was concerned with forging an identity, a sense of 'belonging', it was more concerned with having and showing its gardens. The consensus by scholars today is that we owe the revival of the Renaissance garden, also referred to as the formal school of landscape and/or classical

[76] Mumford, Lewis. 1926. *The Golden Day: A Study in American Experience and Culture*. New York: Boni and Liveright.

[77] Dow, Joy Wheeler. 1904. *American Renaissance:A Review of Domestic Architecture*. New York. P.19,167

garden style, to Charles A. Platt, and its popularization in America at the beginning of the 20th century to Edith Wharton.[78]

Platt, an artist by training, had spent some time in Europe before returning to the United States in the late 19th century, and settled in Cornish, New Hampshire: an area with landscape characteristics like the hills surrounding Tuscany.[79] Platt and his brother, William, who worked for Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., had taken a trip to Italy to measure and document Italian villas and gardens, most of them in absolute states of disrepair. This trip to Italy in the winter of 1891-92 was to give the younger brother, William, a different perspective and a wider experience of gardens and their history than he was receiving in America.[80] This trip also marked a turning point in Platt's career, and inspired further work and writings that would eventually change the direction of landscape architecture in America. His book, *Italian Gardens,* would also influence the restoration of many Italian gardens amongst the Anglo-American community in Florence. Platt was infatuated with the Renaissance gardens in Italy, having documented many of them during his trip in 1891-92. His book, published one year later, was the first of its genre in the United States.[81]

Platt's notion of bringing architecture into garden design was imbued with ideas of defining space in humanist terms (as opposed to the more abstract social uses perceptible in the English garden). His first gardens were designed for himself and for

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[78] Davidson, Rebecca Warren. 1994. *Images and Ideas of Italian Gardens in American Landscape.* Dissertation, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Platt, Charles A. 1894;2000*. Italian Gardens.* Sagaponack, N.Y.: Sagapress Inc.

his friends and neighbors in the summer artists' colony at Cornish. His personality attracted a social and artistic community who were avid and serious gardeners and whose work was the subject of critical articles published during their time.[82] Platt's own home and garden was built in 1891.

Based on a careful study of the chronology of the revival of the formal gardens in the United States and in Italy, it has become apparent that the first modern effort to implement formal garden architecture emerged in the United States, in this Cornish community during the last decade of the 19th century. Ellen Shipman wrote that "here was the renaissance of gardening in America".[83] This effort, initiated by Platt, was later followed by Edith Wharton through her book *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*, originally published in 1904.[84] These practitioners can be called the *First Renaissance Revival Group.* Rebecca Warren Davidson in referring to the formal school of landscape states that,

> *With regards to the American landscape, the Italian formal garden can be understood, not as somehow aesthetically inferior to the picturesque gardens being promoted at the time, but rather as an important contributor to the making of a humanist tradition in American garden design, one which is an important legacy to the art of landscape architecture in the United States.*[85]

[82] Davidson, Rebecca Warren. 1994. *Images and Ideas of Italian gardens in American Landscape.*Dissertation, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

[83] Shipman, Ellen Biddle. 1950. *Garden Notebook (1869-1950)*. Cornell University Library.

[84] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008*. Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

[85] Davidson, Rebecca Warren. 1994. *Images and Ideas of Italian gardens in American Landscape.*Dissertation, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

United States: the training of American Architects

The educational format developed by the Ecole was adopted by American architectural schools and used by them until the 1930's. A. D. F. Hamlin[86] praised the Beaux Arts method of instruction for having produced well-trained American architects whose works had done a great deal to improve the look of American cities. Geoffrey Broadbent summed it up as follows:

> The Ecole is important in our scheme of things because its mode of education dominated architecture and the way that architects were taught until the 1920's when the Bauhaus presented a different scheme. The point about all this is that there were two kinds of teaching at the Ecole des Beaux Arts: theory in the classroom and design in the ateliers. Quite separate things, taught by very different individuals…[87]

Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764-1820) is regarded as America's first professional architect. Before the Civil War, architects were trained through apprenticeship, as was Latrobe who was trained in London. Young men would go through a learning process that included drawing the classical orders then he would rise to the level of draughtsman's and continue to hone the skills needed to become a senior draughtsman and finally a junior partner of the firm. These men emerged as trained businessmen: a quality that has been lost when this method of education began to change after the War.

American alumni returning from the *Ecole de Beaux Arts* established the Society of Beaux Arts Architects in 1853. They sought to standardize the Ecole's style studio

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[86] Hamlin, A.D.F., 1908. *The Influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on our Architectural Education in The Architectural Record.* XXIII No. 4. P. 245.

[87] Broadbent, Geoffrey. 1995. *Architectural Education*. In Educating Architects, (eds.) Martin Pierce and Maggie Toy. London: Academie Editors.

teaching system for young American architects.[88] What developed was a series of small schools that resembled the *Ecole*; some were independent schools or architectural clubs run by professors while others were linked to university degree programs such as MIT and Columbia. All sought to standardize the *Ecole de Beaux Arts* style of atelier or studio teaching system for budding American architects. These small schools were advocates of the classical norms emphasizing beauty, proportion, and scale. They focused on transmitting the understanding of the architecture of antiquity to the Renaissance and promoted lively debates on aesthetics and civilization in general. With funding from well-known figures such as J. P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie, the Society was able to sponsor Ecole style *concours* -- the greatest being the Paris Prize -- a scholarship to study at the Ecole itself.

The American Institute of Architects was founded in 1857 and it would influence some universities to begin formal programs in the profession. As the number of universities offering a degree in architecture began to increase in the United States, the Ecole's system of training became their standard of choice. This system would remain unchallenged until the 1930's when the tide of European Modernism swept the United States.

Meeting of Minds: Convergence in Florence

Anglo-Americans in Florence

The Anglo-Florentines were a group of English and American expatriates living in Florence. This group, drawn to the nostalgic glow of the Renaissance, had purchased

[88] Harmon, Robert B.,1983. *Arts Classicism in American Architecture: A Brief Style Guide*. Monticello, IL. Vance Bibliographies.

many of the villas abandoned during the Italian struggle for unification. Art and history formed the main interest of this community, but horticulture was a close second. The idea of villa life was what attracted this group of Anglo-Florentines.[89] Edith Wharton, in her book *Italian Villas and their Gardens,*[90] explained that these country houses were often more splendid than any urban palace for they were set among vast olive orchards and vineyards and they lay there in splendid harmony and classical grace. For the Anglo-Florentines, they represented the essence of Florence. There they could imagine themselves as enlightened humanists in the Florence of the Renaissance, not exiles retreating from expanding industrial cities.[91]

The Anglo-Florentines, encouraged by Janet Ross (1842-1927) and Vernon Lee (1856-1935), established a new intellectual atmosphere based on scholarly studies of literature, history, art and observation. Based on these principles, members of this group began renovating their gardens with an eye to historical accuracy.[92]

However, it was another woman within the group of Anglo-Florentines that would initiate a renewed interest in Italian gardens. In 1901, Princess Jeanne Ghyka remodeled a small parterre within the garden of her Villa Gamberaia. The design sparked the creation of a group of garden enthusiasts that Terry Schnadelbach would

[89] Cambell, Katie. 2009. *Paradise of Exiles.* London: Frances Lincoln Limited.

[90] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008*. Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

[91] Cambell, Katie. 2009. *Paradise of Exiles.* London: Frances Lincoln Limited.

[92] See Downing, Ben (2013) *Queen Bee of Tuscany: the Round Table Janet Ross*, Ferrar, Straus and Giroux, N.Y.; Moorhead, Caroline (2002*) Iris Origo: Marquesa de Val d'Orcia* ; Acton, Harold (2008), *Memoirs of an Aesthete*, London. Faber & Faber.

name the “Second Renaissance Circle”.[93] It was the renaissance of the Renaissance garden that, after a decade and a half, had codified a new landscape art form, the modern Italian garden. In his book *Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens,* Terry Schnadelbach describes this group as follows: “a *contingent of foreign libertines seeking escape from the views of restricted societies of Northern Europe”.* He goes on to state that:

> Florence became the center for a new breed of aesthete, a place where copies and fakes were turned out daily, where moneyed men and devoted aesthete… led a new type of life – the place of choice for the new breed that included such notables as Arthur Acton, Charles Loeser, Charles A. Strong, George Santayana and Bernard Berenson, all who left their mark on the city.’ [94]

While pursuing their studies in art, literature and culture, this group of carefree expatriates injected new life into several of Tuscany’s decrepit gardens, touring the countryside for inspiration and buying original ornaments and sculptures in their attempt to design authentic Renaissance gardens for their villas. Despite such diligence, what they created was a unique hybrid, replacing gravel terraces with emerald lawns and stuffing their box parterres with colorful flowering plants. They added an unmistakable layer of English taste to the Italian originals. Elegant and scholarly, these gardens enthusiasts added an important chapter to the history of Italian gardens.[95]

Although many of the Anglo-Florentine garden makers were British, the first modern books on the subject were written by Americans. In 1894, Charles Platt published *Italian Gardens.* But if Platt’s was the first influential book on the subject, the

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[93] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010*. Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[94] Ibid. P. 13.

[95] Cambell, Katie. 2009. *Paradise of Exiles.* London: Frances Lincoln Limited.

most influential was Edith Wharton's 1904 *Italian Villas and their Gardens.*[96] Her book became popular on both sides of the Atlantic, fueling a growing interest in Italian gardens amongst the new class of American millionaires. The Anglo-Florentines did not seek social recognition from the restoration of their gardens but instead searched for cultural, intellectual and aesthetic satisfaction. Their gardens were meant to be enjoyed and lived in.

American Influence in Florence

Stanford White, one of Americas stellar architects in the late 19th century and known for designing beautifully proportioned structures adorned by Italian renaissance ornamentation, imported most of his *objets d'art* and garden ornaments to the United States for all his architectural commissions.[97] White's main supplier of European antiquities would become Arthur Acton (1873-1953), a young Englishman living in Florence to whom he would be introduced while they were both visiting the World Chicago Exposition in 1893. [98] It was this encounter with White that marked a turning point in Acton's life as his European export business flourished and expanded to supply *objets d'art* to other American architects and landscape architects, including Charles A. Platt.

In Florence, a large community of Anglo-American expatriates had settled in and around the hills surrounding the city, taking up residence in many of the derelict villas once belonging to the Italian nobility. Within this community were three individuals who

[96] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008*. Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

[97] Craven, Wayne. 2005. *Standford White - Decorator in Opulence and Dealer in Antiquities*. New York: Coulumbia University Press.

[98] Alliata, Dialta. 2013. *My Mother, My Father and His Wife Hortense.* California: Createspace.

took the lead in restoring their villas and gardens to a Renaissance style. Together with three young architects, they later came to be known as the *Second Renaissance Circle.*[99] The name of the group, *Second Renaissance Circle,* refers to the fact that it was this group of six – three villa owners and three young practitioners – who initiated this second wave that brought back the ideas and style of the Renaissance gardens to their villas in Florence for the first time in four centuries.

One of the villa owners was Albanian Princess Katherine Jeanne Ghyka, née Kesko, of Villa Gamberaia, sister of Queen Nathalie of Serbia, who lived at one of the *villinas*[100] at Villa La Pietra.[101] Princess Ghyka was the first of the group to take on the renovation of her garden by converting her vegetable garden into a *parterre d'eau*, or water parterre, at her villa in 1896. The villa, a Tuscan country house of modest proportions, stands on a high ridge above the village of Settignano with an unrivalled view of the valley of the River Arno. Edith Wharton discusses the Villa Gamberaia extensively in her book *Italian Villas and their Gardens* and highlights the relationship between house and garden which is interlocking rather than axial.[102] Maxfield Parrish, who had been a member of the Cornish community in New Hampshire since 1890 and a close friend of Charles A. Platt, accompanied Wharton on her trip to Italy with the purpose of illustrating the villas for Wharton's book.

[99] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010*. Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[100] *Villinas* is the Italian word for a small house within the Villa compound.

[101] Acton, Harold. 2008. *Memoirs of an Aesthete*. London. Faber & Faber Ltd.

[102] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008*. Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press.

The other two owners were Bernard Berenson (1865-1959) of Villa Il Tatti and Arthur Acton of Villa La Pietra. The young architects who helped bring the ideas to fruition were Diego Suarez, who worked with Arthur Acton in the restoration of his garden at La Pietra,[103] and Cecil Pinsent and Geoffrey Scott, both young English architects who had settled in Florence and were hired by Berenson to remodel his villa and create his formal garden at Il Tatti.[104]

Considering this chronology, the *Second Renaissance Circle* in Florence can therefore be interpreted to fit a new hypothesis: that this group was, in fact, inspired by the *American Renaissance Revival* and more specifically, the *First Renaissance Revival Group* in Cornish, New Hampshire. Until now, the existing theory has been that Platt was influenced by Italian villa gardens, but no one has ventured to say that the *Second Renaissance Circle* in Florence was influenced by Charles A. Platt. This new theory makes the Florentine restorations that revived the idea of formal garden design in their own community the second effort and may therefore more properly be called the *Second Renaissance Revival Group.*

[103] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[104] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010. *Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

CHAPTER 4
PREPPING THE GROUND FOR VIZCAYA, PART II: THE DEERINGS AND MIAMI

The Development of South Florida: A Sub-Tropical Paradise

As America was beginning to transform itself into an industrialized nation, the Industrial Revolution, much like the Technological Revolution at the turn of the 21st century, would endow a small number of individuals with unfathomable wealth. These individuals would come to be known as captains of industry of America's Gilded Age.[1]

This era in American history encompassed the decades following the Civil War. It was a time of rapid economic growth and high concentration of wealth based mostly on industrialization and the growth of the railroad system. It was also a time of American expansion into unconquered territories towards the West and the South. Commercial farming became profitable with the manufacturing of new machinery and expansion of the railway system. Distances were shortened, and people were encouraged to move and explore these new lands.

In the early 1880's, Florida and California were the last frontiers of the American republic. *Paradise*, the Persian word for garden, came to symbolize "*the highest delights which the body or soul of man can enjoy."*[2] Florida was touted as a tropical paradise where the brilliant sunshine and crystalline blue skies would dissolve away all worldly concerns. Northern capitalists arriving to Florida discovered that it was not quite as advertised. Reality was tinged with insects, heat and humidity. To northerners, Florida

[1] In the late 19th century a captain of industry was a business leader whose means of amassing a personal fortune contributed positively to the country in some way through increased productivity, expansion of markets, providing more jobs, or acts philanthropy.

[2] Major, Judith K. 2013. *Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer: A Landscape Critic in the Gilded Age.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press. P. 97.

was perceived as a swampy wasteland, even a forbidden zone for white Americans.[3] Nonetheless, the railroad to the Midwestern and the Northeastern United States would unleash a wave of promoters or boosters who would sell the state as tropical and semi-tropical to Anglo-Americans willing to relocate to these "foreign" lands.

"Boosters" played an essential role in the psychological conversion of fearsome wilderness into lush homeland, of waste places into American gardens. Boosters refers to journalists, businessmen and developers who wrote about California or Florida with promotions selling hopes and ideals in the service of vested interests focusing on the positive aspects of the states while diminishing or ignoring investors, awkward or undesirable realities. They were an influential group who represented railroads, chambers of commerce, state agencies, hotels, real estate companies, and local periodicals.[4]

All these characteristics would entice some individuals to look south in search of wealth or health. One was Henry Morrison Flagler. Flagler had been the mastermind behind the expansion of Standard Oil, a company he had developed with his partner John D. Rockefeller and one that became one of the most prosperous companies in the World. Wealth was not the motivation behind Flagler's interest in Florida. Despite his millions, money could not buy a cure for his ailing wife, Mary. Mary Flagler had suffered from chronic bronchitis which later became tuberculosis. Doctors suggested that a winter in Florida might improve her condition. Flagler did not hesitate and accompanied

[3] Knight, Henry. 1982. *Tropic of Hope; California, Florida and the Selling of American Paradise 1869-1929*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

[4] Ibid. P. 6.

his wife and children on a train as far as Jacksonville where lack of adequate transportation and accommodations would prevent them from continuing further south.[5] The promise of a permanent cure in the American tropics motivated Flagler to vacation in St. Augustine, Florida. This trip would mark the beginning of a new challenge for Flagler: the Florida East Coast Railway. It would also mark the beginning of development in South Florida.

Florida served as a retreat for different groups of people. Available land with a unique climate and abundant resources drew various cultures from around the world to the peninsula. With the extension of Flagler's railroad, the trend set by the ancient ancestors of the Tequesta, Europeans, Africans, Seminole, and American settlers later evolved into the migration of American tourists.[6]

In the last decades of the 19th century, the South Florida frontier represented new opportunity. Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway was planned and lands were provided by the State for development. Few towns existed inland by 1888, but a concentration of newly urbanized areas was emerging in Northern Biscayne Bay, including the villages of Coconut Grove and Miami.

Other Industrialists: The Deerings of Miami

William Deering was born in Paris, South Maine. William had been widowed and was left with one son, Charles. Charles Deering graduated from the United States Naval Academy and studied art in Paris before entering the family business.[7] William

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[5] Standiford, Les. 2002*. Last Train to Paradise.* New York: Random House.

[6] Stockbridge, Frank P. and Perry, John H. 1926. *Florida in the Making*. The Bower Publishing Co. New York.

[7] Charles Deering was an interesting individual in his own right. In addition to having been the Chairman of the International Harvester Company from 1902-1910, he was also an amateur naturalist, an astute

remarried and had a second son, James, who attended Northwestern University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before joining the Deering Harvester Company in 1880.

William Deering inherited a family wool mill in South Paris. He invested in land in the western United States and financially backed the development of agricultural machinery to make his property more valuable. In 1873, he moved his family to Illinois and assumed control of a farm equipment manufacturer, renaming it the Deering Harvester Company. Deering Harvester enabled farmers to harvest an acre of grain in an hour – a dramatic increase in productivity that allowed commercial agriculture in the west to be more profitable. As more reapers were sold, Deering's land investments became more valuable and by the end of the 19th century, William Deering had amassed a great fortune, placing him amongst America's wealthiest entrepreneurs. In 1902, investment banker JP Morgan orchestrated the merger of the Deering Harvester Company with the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and created the International Harvester Corporation.[8]

Like many wealthy northerners, the Deerings were drawn to the warmer, wilder tropical regions of Florida. Around 1890, William Deering's health weakened, and the family began spending winters in St. Augustine, Florida; by 1902, William Deering

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early collector of art of El Greco, and a painter himself. He had studied art in Paris with Anders Zorn and had become a close friend of John Singer Sargent. On a trip to Florida in the Spring of 1917, Sargent visited both Charles and James Deering and painted a number of watercolors of Vizcaya, some of which are now at the Worcester Art Museum. For more information on Charles Deering's life, see Walter Dill Scott and Robert B. Harsha (1929), *Charles Deering 1852-1927: An appreciation together with his Memoirs of William Deering and James Deering*, privately printed, Boston; Isabell Coll Mirabent (2012) *Charles Deering and Ramon Casas: a Friendship in Art,* Northwestern University Press; Rebecca Warren Davidson, (1989) *The Italian Garden in American Landscape Design: Its Significance and Manifestation in the Villa Vizcaya*. Cornell University, Master of Arts Thesis, Ithaca, New York.

[8] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985*. The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

purchased land and built a modest winter home in Coconut Grove, just south of Miami, a move that would eventually bind their sons to the area.[9]

In 1910, James was diagnosed with a severe form of megaloblastic anemia[10] and was advised by his physician to spend extended periods of time in the healthy climate of warmer regions exposed to clean air.[11] This diagnosis seems to have been the greatest influence in the decision to construct Vizcaya in Florida. William Deering had introduced the family to the "Sunshine State" when he began spending winters in St. Augustine.[12] Charles seems to have been initially more enthusiastic about Florida than James was at first. He purchased a property, Buena Vista estate, north of Miami, also in 1910.[13]James did not seem to have considered Florida a suitable location to spend his time. By the turn of the century, he owned homes on Lakeshore Drive in Chicago as well as in New York City and at Neuilly-sur-Seine, near Paris. Miami in the early 1900's was a far cry from the cosmopolitan life of Paris (Figure C-1). James Deering was very partial to the south of France; Europe seems to have been his first choice to establish a winter residence rather than the semi-wild subtropical hammocks of South Florida.[14] However, perhaps due to family ties or the long distance of transatlantic travels, James finally decided to build in Florida. Two years into retirement from the International Harvester

[9] Moore-Parks, Arva and Bennet, Bo. 2010. *Coconut Grove*. Arcadia Publishing. Charleston.

[10] Vitamin B-12 and folic acid deficiencies are the most common causes of megaloblastic anemia.

[11] Nardi, Maria and Lombard, Joanna. 2000. *Villa Vizcaya*. Commissioned by Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Unpublished.

[12] Lombard, Joanna and Ceo, Rocco. 2001. *Historic Landscapes of Florida*. University of Miami Press. Miami.

[13] Ibid. P. 24.

[14] Subtropical hardwood hammocks are narrow bands of broadleaf forest that occur on the coastal plain of the southeastern United States.

Company and with his parents in Coconut Grove and brother in nearby Buena Vista, James Deering joined the South Florida development boom that he had witnessed since his parents' first visits to the state in the late 19th century.

Miami had a population of 10,000 inhabitants.[15] Both Charles and James Deering had lodged with the Brickell family when they visited their father.[16] In 1910, James began to plan his own home in Miami, in 1912, he purchased 130 acres on Brickell Point east of Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway. It was a heavily-forested, sparsely-populated coastline between downtown Miami, a small city at the time, and Coconut Grove. James Deering sought a secluded location, directly on the water, surrounded by diverse Florida ecosystems. Deering positioned his future winter home within the Brickell Hammock, a rich subtropical hardwood forest along the Silver Bluff at the edge of the Miami Rock Ridge some five miles from the mouth of the Miami River to Coconut Grove.[17]

James Deering's world was one in which travel, art, collecting, and building great estates were the priviledged extracurricular activities of America's corporate and social elite**.** As aristocratic fortunes in Europe declined, America's new collectors had the opportunity to import the best of European cultural traditions in of art and design.where

[15] Patricios, Nicholas N. 1994. *Building Marvelous Miami.* University Press of Florida. Gainesville.

[16] *William and Mary Brickell: Founders of Miami and Fort Lauderdale* — the first comprehensive historical biography about the family. Historians argue about who was more influential – the pioneering entrepreneur William and his wife Mary, a bright and bold investor, or their contemporary Julia Tuttle, often called the "Mother of Miami." Arva Moore Parks, a Miami historian and author of *Miami, The Magic City,* and *The Forgotten Frontier,* credits Tuttle the pivotal move of convincing industrialist Henry Flagler to extend his railroad to South Florida, putting the area on the map. But the Brickell's came to Miami 20 years before Tuttle and certainly left their mark, particularly in the neighborhood of the city that bears their name today.

[17] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007.*Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers.* University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia.

they would eventually become part of institutions and private collections. Like others of their acquaintance (Berthe Honore Palmer, Isabella Stewart Gardner and J. P. Morgan), James and his half-brother, Charles, both collected European art. In addition to purchasing important paintings by Francisco Goya, El Greco, and Francisco de Zurbaran, Charles maintained lifelong friendships with contemporary painters John Singer Sargent, Anders Zorn, and Gari Melchers. James Deering owned important works by Edouard Manet and Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, which he eventually bequeathed to the Art Institute of Chicago.[18]

Patrons of the American Renaissance also travelled extensively in Europe where they acquired a taste for architectural styles and decorative arts of the past. They hired American architects to produce modern versions of their favorite palazzo, chateau, or villa for their city houses and country estates. James and Charles Deering were no exception.

James Deering hired designer Paul Chalfin to assemble a diverse collection of antiquities that represented many cultures and periods of art. These included wide-ranging ancient Roman sculpture, Renaissance tapestries, Chinese ceramics, Rococo and neoclassical furniture, and even contemporary modern art. Chalfin's task was to conceive Vizcaya as a centuries-old villa, or Italian country estate, as a framework to unite these select treasures from ancient times to the present.[19]

Charles Deering, an avid amateur botanist and plant enthusiast, was devoted to Florida vegetation. This enthusiasm played a significant role in James's ideas and

[18] Mirabent, Isabel Coll. 2012. *Charles Deering and Ramon Casas: A Friendship in Art.* Chicago: NorthWestern University Press.

[19] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

approach to the garden design for his new estate, exemplified in his expressed desire to save and protect as much of the virgin hammock as possible.[20] Nonetheless, even before there was a design for the gardens, the site had already been cleared, filled-in and prepared for transformation. In terms of style, it was not until 1914 that Deering had reached his final decision:

> We will have a formal garden that shall be really Italian, as I think under the circumstances it ought to be. What makes an Italian garden as distinguished from a French or English formal garden I do not know, but I presume you do…[21]

Just like Louis XIV used Versailles as a structure to support his persona, James Deering would build Vizcaya to be where he could charm and captivate his world. Like Versailles, it would be an immoderate display of luxury and opulence, the former from the "Golden Age" and the latter from the "Gilded Age". Erik Orsenna, in *Andre Le Nôtre*, reflected on the Golden Age in terms quite sympathetic to a social-process-of-design:

> What is it that produces a Golden Age, a sort of wave, suddenly lifting the arts of one particular country to heights of excellence? It takes wealth, certainly. But so many opulent eras hoard and build without anything to show for it. It takes mighty patrons, who have dreams and commission works. But what can their wild desires accomplish if there is no one to answer the call? What explains the general mobilization welling up from the very depths of one nation to transform a century – or part of a century – into a collective masterpiece? The genius of a few individuals is not enough; it has to be backed up by a vast pool of talents and knowledge whose repositories are men and women born roughly at the same time. Nor can they be unaware of each other's existence; they have to see one another, speak together, feel esteem – or the reverse for each other, plan to work together or compete with one another. In short, a Golden Age is the joint progeny of an entire generation.[22]

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Letter from James Deering to Paul Chalfin. Deering Files. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[22] Orsenna, Erik. 2001. *Andre Le Notre: Gardener of the Sun King.* New York: George Braziller. P. 59.

The Deerings' Estates

Vizcaya and the Charles Deering Estate are two distinct properties, each a reflection of its respective brother. James Deering's Vizcaya portrays his interest in collecting antiquities while at the same time preserving the hammock upon which it is built. His estate was inspired by the Italian Renaissance, a clear importation of a European design to South Florida. James collected 15th to 19th century art for his mansion and when the property was gifted to Miami Dade County in 1953, the stipulations were articulated in the warranty deed:

> The Grantee, by acceptance of this deed, covenants and agrees, for and on behalf of itself, its successors and assigns, to and with the Grantors, their heirs, legal representatives and assigns, that said property shall be used in perpetuity only for park and museum purposes."[23]

Most of the natural hammock had been sold and developed and very little of the original vegetation remained. The house and garden were bundled up into one entity and its name was changed to Dade County Art Museum. Years later, the name would change to Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

Charles Deering's estate at Cutler, on the other hand, was focused on preserving the native pine forest and ecology. Charles lived for years in the historic wooden inn and the only remaining wooden structure of its kind in South Florida. A new stone house, inspired by his house in Sitges, Spain, was built to exhibit the works of Spanish masters such as El Greco, Diego Velasquez, and Rembrandt.[24] In total, Charles Deering amassed more than 4,000 pieces of art and possessed one of the largest collections of

[23] Vizcaya Warranty Deed, 1953, P. 3. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[24] Mirabent, Isabel Coll. 2012. *Charles Deering and Ramon Casas: A Friendship in Art.* Chicago: NorthWestern University Press.

art in the world.[25] His influence on art lives on.In 1985, the Nature Conservancy brokered the deal that allowed the State of Florida and Miami-Dade County to purchase the property. Charles Deering was passionate about art and the environment. This passion was clearly captured in the agreement with the County and State when it passed to public ownership. Its focus and use are defined as "*environmental protection and compatible public outdoor recreation and related purposes.*" The Deering Estate at Cutler is growing in importance as a creative studio for local artists and art and remains the only pine preserve left in South Florida.

The adventuresome group of pioneers drawn to the unchartered and exotic landscape of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Florida created remarkable buildings and gardens of great beauty and Vizcaya is one.

But equally important to the architectural and environmental heritage of South Florida is lesser known vernacular cottages like the one still standing on the Deering Estate at Cutler and the 380 acres of natural hammock preserved by Charles Deering and his heirs.[26]

Differences and Similarities

The fact that Charles and James Deering both chose Coconut Grove should not be a surprise, since, as stated previously, William Deering had brought the two brothers to this area of the state. Both Deering brothers and the father had followed the southward trek. By the creation of their large Miami estates, they studiously avoided the dense development accompanying Flagler's land acquisitions which was part of the

[25] Ibid.

[26] On This Land. The Charles Deering Estate. A Historical Film Documentary presented by the 100 Ladies of Deering. © by the Deering Estate Foundation, Inc.

acreage component of the Florida East Coast Rail Way construction as per Florida law. Both chose some combination of nature and culture. Villa Vizcaya and the Deering Estate at Cutler are unique properties envisioned by each brother with vastly different visions, and today they offer vastly different experiences to visitors. Comparing and contrasting the two estates reveals a remarkable blend of similarities and differences.

Both properties are rich in natural environment and history of South Florida, though they developed differently. The Deering Estate at Cutler, for example, has a history that dates back over one thousand years. It was part of a Native American site. It was also one of the southernmost parts of the country. Charles Deering purchased it in 1913. From that point onward to today, the Deering estate integrity as a conservation preserve has remained intact. Both estates have different histories, they both hold significant social influence in South Florida's cultural and environmental spheres.

The two properties harbor natural and artistic treasures. While Villa Vizcaya was designed around a collection of artifacts and introduced man-made ornamental gardens into the natural hammock, the Deering Estate preserved the natural south Florida environment. This difference has a lot to do with the distinct intents of each of the brothers. Charles directed his own constructions. His experience in the Navy influenced his love of navigation, and this love of the sea influenced the choice of his homesites during his lifetime.[27]

[27] Matthews, Janet Snyder. 1992. *Historical Documentation - The Charles Deering Estate at Cutler*. For Metro Dade County Parks and Recreation Department. P. 53. http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/inhouse/Matthews_Deering_text.pdf

James on the other hand, collected for Vizcaya. He would hire one man, an artist, to advise in the purchases and in the building that would house his collection. While Charles preferred to restore the historic Richmond Cottage, James would build an extravagant home. His love for Spanish culture would later inspire him to build a neo-Spanish house next to the cottage where his vast art collection could be hung without fear of fire.

Both brothers established agricultural areas in their estates. James's farm village produced food for the Villa, much in the style of the European villas it was inspired by, where the agricultural fields were removed from the immediate surrounding of the house. Charles, on the other hand, introduced an experimental avocado and mango farm next to the house.

Like Charles, James enjoyed boating and fishing, and located his house on the Bay. He dredged a canal on axis with the house with the intention of arriving to Vizcaya by boat. Charles dredged a boat turning basin and a one-mile long channel extending from Biscayne Bay to his house.

Both properties are conceptually and aesthetically distinct, yet many of the components that comprise each are conceptually similar. The similarity between them can be attributed to the shared socio-cultural background embedded in their individual personas.

CHAPTER 5
DIEGO SUAREZ: A COLOMBIAN, ITALIAN, and AMERICAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Early Life in Bogota (1888-1907)

To truly understand Diego Suarez, it is important to understand his family background and how it played a character-defining role throughout his personal and professional life. Suarez's rich heritage and diverse experiences as student, landscape architect, architect, diplomat, writer and world traveler, informed his work and coalesced to create his most famous work: the formal garden at Villa Vizcaya.

It was while Suarez's father, Roberto, held the office of Consul General of Colombia in Florence that he met and married Suarez's mother, María Costa. The second child of an aristocratic Italian family, Maria Costa y Miranda had grown up in Paris and Florence. She made sure that her children would learn Italian and French at an early age.

Roberto and Maria returned to Bogota after their wedding in Florence. Ten months after her arrival to Bogota, Maria gave birth to their first son, Diego Suarez Costa y Miranda. He was named after his paternal grandfather. Four more children followed: Roberto, Juan Camilo, Camila and Lucia Suarez Costa y Miranda. The young family lived a comfortable life in Bogota. The children were home schooled. The weekends were spent in the family's haciendas where the rest of the family members met on Sundays.[1]

The city of Bogota was laid-out by the Spaniards according to the chessboard plan with its streets intersecting at right angles and its main plaza located at the center.

[1] Suarez-Niño, Jose Asuncion. 2013.Interview with Researcher. Bogota, Colombia.

Over time, the city expanded its urban perimeter. The traditional neighborhoods remained as the main residential cores in the city but new neighborhoods emerged for the upper class of Bogota, far from the center of the city.[2]

Family connections, both from his father's side and his mother's, provided Suarez with access to the upper echelons of society wherever he went, suggesting that he spent his youth in a cosmopolitan and literate environment. In addition, his paternal wealth gave him the means to travel and to live wherever he pleased since he had inherited sufficient capital from his forebears.[3]

Suarez Arrives in Florence (1906-1914)

Suarez moved to Europe with his mother and siblings in 1906. It is believed they first settled in Paris and Suarez, being the eldest, was sent to Oxford to study at his uncle's alma mater, Oxford Brookes University, though this remains unconfirmed. He then moved to Florence where he entered the *Accademia di Belli Arti di Firenze* to begin his studies in Architecture. Research conducted at the archives of the Academy in May 2014 confirmed his attendance in the Academy between December 1907 and 1912, and revealed further information about his classmates, courses, writing skills and professors.[4] At the *Accademia* he faced a rigorous four-year study program. He lived in a student residence at Piazza Donatello 2, where he would spend the following four years immersed in architectural studies.[5] Years later he would write,

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[2] Fundacion Mision Colombia. 1988. *Historia de Bogota, Tomos I,II,III.* Bogota: Villegas Editores.

[3] Last will and testament of Diego Suarez Fortoul (Suarez 's paternal grandfather) – Notaria Segunda del Circuito de Bogotá D.C., Folio No. 1412, septiembre 28, 1895.

[4] Archives at Accademia di Belli Arti di Firenze, Italy.

[5] Ibid.

> I practiced architecture in a small way, but I became very interested in garden design; during that time, I became a good friend of Arthur Acton, an Englishman who owned the Villa La Pietra on the Montughi Hill in Florence. Mr. Acton was a disciple, you might say of the great Henri Duchene, and he had been engaged for several years in restoring the superb Renaissance gardens on his estate, some parts of them going back to the seventeenth century. They had been destroyed during the stupid craze for naturalistic English gardens. Arthur Acton was my tutor. I went to his villa four or five times a week while he was at work carefully supervising the restoration. He gave me my teaching in Italian garden design, and he taught me Duchene's ideals.[6]

While at the Academy, Suarez was also in the company of other very talented students who went on to be celebrated for contributions to their chosen fields. Through social interaction, they stimulated, challenged and learned from one another.[7] As a classical scholar, Suarez had to learn the rules, proportions and measurements of the ancient orders of the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns and entablatures in the same way students have since the Renaissance. One of Suarez's essays on Greek architecture survives in the archives of the Accademia.

While he was at the Accademia, Suarez associated with several members of the Anglo-American and European expatriate community who were transforming their villas

[6] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[7] One such classmate was Giovanni Michelucci. (1891-1990) who joined the Academy to study architecture during the same period that Suarez was enrolled. He was drafted into the Italian army during WWI, and while serving in 1916, he completed his first architectural work, a small chapel in Caporetta, Italy. In 1932 he won an architectural competition for the design of the Santa Maria Novella Railway station in Florence, a revolutionary rationalist design which won the approval of Mussolini. This competition catapulted him to international fame. Michelucci was a prolific and admired architect in Italy. Like Suarez, he obtained a formal education based on the principles of the Renaissance period, where nature and the space around him were an integral part of his designs. The Church of St. John the Baptist located on the highway just outside of Florence, is another of his outstanding architectural works often compared to Le Corbusier's Ronchamp (Rocchi 2000). He died in Fiesole just short of reaching his 100th birthday. Although to date no evidence has been found that Suarez and Michelucci continued to communicate throughout their lifetimes it seems probable that they could have met occasionally during Suarez's multiple visits to Florence since they were, after all, part of the same social and artistic milieu who at the very least shared lasting memories of their professional training and success at such a young age.

and gardens from the British or Picturesque Style (also known as the Naturalistic School) to the Italian or Formal Style.[8] Suarez would later in life comment,

> At the time, and during previous years, continental Europe had been subject to the influence of the British landscape, men who advocated the British point of view in garden design, namely lawns, beautiful flowers, shrubs and trees, and favored the so-called naturalistic school. Many superb classical architectural gardens in Europe, including Italy, were unfortunately destroyed at the time to be replaced by creations in the naturalistic style.[9]

Suarez and the Second Renaissance Revival Group

Princess Ghyka and Suarez were the two non-Anglo members of this Florentine group and most likely, it was through the Princess's sister, Queen Natalie of Serbia, that Suarez was introduced to Arthur Acton. One can assume that these Russian Princesses all knew each other, and it is quite possible that it was because of his family connection to the Russian aristocracy that Suarez became a member of the exclusive *Second Renaissance Revival Group*. On the one hand, Acton was a neighbor and landlord of Queen Natalie. She on the other must have been close to Princess Dolgoroukov, longstanding friend of Maria Costa to whom she would leave her villa *Selva & Guasto* upon her death. When Acton began the creation of his formal gardens at La Pietra, Suarez had probably already designed several other gardens around Florence, including Princess Dolgoroukov's villa which would later become his own family villa.[10] Acton's granddaughter, Princess Dialta Alliata di Montereale would later state that,

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[8] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010. *Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens*. Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[9] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[10] It would be safe to assume that Suarez was recommended to Acton by one of these three Russian Princesses. However, Acton and Suarez might have met, this was the beginning of a fruitful relationship between these two men where, in typical Florentine tradition, and much like the original guilds of the 14th

> Arthur Acton was like a father figure to him (Suarez) and taught him everything there was to know about Renaissance gardens and unexpected garden rooms – I know that Suarez was paid by Acton to work at La Pietra… hands on…[11]

This select group of villa owners and young practitioners refined their ideas from exposure to the Renaissance art and architecture that surrounded them. Their aesthetic ideals were in harmony with each other. In addition to the three villa owners, Acton, Berenson and Gyhka, Suarez was collaborating closely with the other two young practitioners in the group: Geoffry Scott (1884-1929) and Cecil Ross Pinsent (1884-1963).[12]

Geoffrey Scott was a well-educated Englishman and a friend of Mary Berenson. Mary introduced Scott to Cecil Pinsent, who was also training as an architect in England.[13] It would be the beginning of a partnership that would help transform and influence garden-architecture (as it was then called) in Italy in the early 20th century. In her biography on Iris Origo, Katherine Moorehead states that,

> By 1909 Edward Houghton proposed to the Berenson's that they employ Pinsent, who was now settled in Florence and working for an art collector friend of Berenson, Charles Loeser, as well as designing a water parterre for Princess Ghyka at the Villa Gamberaia. Mary Berenson proposed Geoffrey Scott as Pinsent's partner… Pinsent was conscientious, hardworking and an excellent draughtsman, but also highly impractical, unsure of his own taste or style, and could not control the

century, Acton assumed the role of master, while Suarez was the apprentice, in this case perfecting the art of garden design.

[11] Email from Dialta Alliata to researcher on April 9, 2015.

[12] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010. *Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[13] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* R. Godine Publisher, Boston.

> workmen…Pinsent had strange periods of purposeless activity…Mary Berenson called them her 'artichokes'.[14]

Their final project pleased Berenson and both Scott and Pinsent received many offers to design new gardens for the Anglo-American community in Florence.[15] Despite this professional success, Scott focused his attention on writing and in 1914, published *The Architecture of Humanism,* a book that won him a reputation as an architectural critic*.* Two years later, he married Lady Sybil Cutting (1879-1943), who was five years his senior. This union lasted for only a few years.

Much like Suarez, who had spent his childhood in his family's *haciendas* in the Savannah of Bogota and later in the hills of Tuscany, Cecil Ross Pinsent had spent his early childhood in the rolling open pampas of Uruguay and then at his uncle's house in the Midlands in England.[16] He studied architecture in England and upon graduating, made his way to Florence. Through his British contacts, Pinsent was hired by Mary and Bernard Berenson to conduct the renovation of the library and gardens at their villa, *Il Tatti*. Pinsent soon became part of the small group of Anglo-Americans living in Florence at the turn of the 20th century.

Pinsent, Scott and Suarez were trained architects and were employed by the elder members, namely Princess Ghyka, Bernard Berenson and Arthur Acton, to execute their ideas for the renovation of their own villas. These three Second Renaissance revival gardens would be built on the principles of the old, yet they

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

contained programmatic elements such as the *teatrino*, the double or triple axis, and the *parterre d'eau*, elements that had previously not appeared in the design of Italian gardens. Of these three individuals, Pinsent was the only one that would continue designing gardens in Florence long after Scott had taken up writing and Suarez had left for America. Pinsent is best known for his garden at La Foce, designed for Iris Origo.[17]

Suarez's Mentor

Arthur Mario Acton (1873-1953) was born in London on the 15th of March 1874 to Mary Jane Dingle, who appears to have been a servant in the household of Roger Acton, the assumed father of Arthur Acton. Action was raised by his godfather, Cardinal Manning (1808-1892), who presided over a school of orphans at the town of Acton Burnell in Middlesex England. The school was apparently a gift of the Acton family and Arthur, by his own account, clearly had the support of a wealthy family:

> My father had provided enough funds for me to continue my education when I reached 18, so I decided that I should study at the Ecôle des Beaux Arts in Paris. Once I graduated, I came to Italy. I was curious to see Naples, were my family had lived for all those years. But I felt like an outsider there. On my way back to Paris, I stopped in Florence, and my soul found its home – when I went to the World Fair Beaux Arts exhibit in Chicago, I met Stanford White (the American architect of the beaux-arts firm McKim, Mead and White). This is when he asked me to become his agent; he needed someone in Florence, so I returned to Italy and I became White's agent.[18]

Acton immediately began searching for *objet's de art*, mainly sculptures and high quality items such as metalwork, statuettes, and architectural pieces that could be

[17] Iris Origo Marchesa of Val d'Orcia, (1902 —1988), née Cutting, was an Anglo-Irish biographer and writer. She lived in Italy, and devoted much of her life to the improvement of the Tuscan estate at La Foce. She was the daughter of Lady Sybil Cutting. Suarez travelled with her and her mother to the United States in 1914 aboard the SS Laurentic from Liveerpool to Quebec.

[18] Alliata, Dialta. 2013. *My Mother, My Father and His Wife Hortense. Provenance:Villa la Pietra.* California: Createspace. P.57,58.

incorporated within White's designs for the grand mansions he was building in the United States at that time.[19] Acton rented the Villa La Pietra at Via Bolognesa that consisted of a 23-hectare complex containing the main villa and four smaller *villinas* for five years.

Acton was known to have a long-time lover, Ersilia Beacci, and her recently published diaries by their mutual grand-daughter, Princess Dialta Alliata di Montereale (neé Dialta Orlandi), provides critical insights into the relationships and activities of Acton, including Suarez. Specifically, she sets the record straight regarding previous allegations by Schnadelbach that Suarez's relationship with Acton was of a sexual nature, as stated in his book *Secret Lives, Secret Gardens.* [20] No such relationship existed.

Despite his relationship with Ersilia Beacci, Acton would marry Hortense Mitchell in Chicago in June 1903. Hortense's father would purchase the villa for his daughter. It was after the purchase of the villa that Acton began the transformation of his garden. For this task he engaged French landscape designer, Achilles Duchene, son of Henri Duchene. During his studies in Paris, Acton had learned of Duchene's reputation for the restoration of Andre Le Notre's gardens and was convinced that this was the man that would help him restore his own garden.[21]

Suarez had now been at the Academy for three years and had become interested in garden design. He began renovating villas and gardens around Florence

[19] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010*. Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

for several friends of his family. In total, he participated in the design of eight gardens (of which only 4 have been identified to date) while studying at the Academy and before travelling to the United States in 1914. Suarez would later state:

> It was in Florence, at his Villa La Pietra, on the Via Bolognese, that in those early days of my life, and while I was practicing architecture in Florence, I was fortunate enough to meet Arthur Acton, a distinguished Englishman who became a great friend of mine and towards whom I have a great feeling of admiration and gratitude. Arthur Acton should be known to future generations as mainly responsible, together with the great French landscape architect, Achilles Duchene, for the revival of the great art of classical garden design. Arthur Acton created the beautiful architectural gardens of La Pietra, and I shall always remain deeply grateful to him for his valuable advice and teachings.[22]

Acton treated Suarez differently from his other employees – with respect.[23] He was invited to the family parties and these invitations may have had to do with the fact that Acton considered himself socially equal to Suarez. Suarez was not only an employee of Acton's, but also a friend. He was a frequent guest at La Pietra's masquerade balls.[24]

Suarez had much in common with Acton; both men admired beauty, both shared a passion for landscape, architecture and art. There was a balance between them. Acton had the ideas and Suarez possessed the technical training to execute them. Their relationship was cordial and warm; it would last for many years and, in fact, change the course of Suarez's life. Arthur Acton's influence on Suarez's career would extend well

[22] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[23] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010. *Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens*. Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

[24] Archives of Villa La Pietra, Florence Italy, 2014.

beyond Florence. Acton's most valuable contribution to Suarez was his mentorship and instruction in the world of landscape architecture.

An excerpt in the catalogue of the exhibition titled 'American Renaissance' presented at the Brooklyn Museum in 1980, mentions Diego Suarez as one of two European emigres' who contributed to the creation of the formal garden in the United States. It states:

> The informal, picturesque method of landscape design did not completely disappear in the 1890's, but the dominant image was the clear language of geometric order derived from the classical past. Among those who worked in the new formalism were European emigres Jacques Greber and Diego Suarez – and Native Americans – the Olmsteds, Beatrix Jones Ferrand, Nathan Barrett, Guy Lowell, and George Burnap. Popularization of the formal landscape design came through several publications, first the writings of Charles Adams Platt and then Edith Wharton who in 1904 published Italian Villas and Their Gardens, with illustrations by Maxfield Parrish.[25]

Suarez: Four Villa Gardens in Florence

By following a series of leads, it was possible to identify the extensive training and many important places, figures and experiences that shaped Suarez's multi-faceted talents. Direct connections to the current villa owners (New York University and Dialta Alliata) as well as writings by Suarez and others, indicate that Suarez was intimately involved in the creation of La Pietra's garden.

Villa La Pietra. Achilles Duchene visited La Pietra in 1910 to see the progress of the garden and make adjustments and suggestions.[26] James T. Maher's notes from his

[25] Wilson, Richard Guy. 1979. In *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917*, P. 75-109.Brooklyn, New York: The Brooklyn Museum.

[26] Archives Villa La Pietra, New York University, Florence, Italy.

interviews with Suarez[27] imply that during these visits, the three men toured the grounds of the villa and it is likely that Suarez would implement what had been suggested and discussed with Duchene. In addition, we know that Suarez visited La Pietra again after he left in 1914, in 1927 and on April 2, 1963.[28]

Slowly, the new formal gardens at La Pietra started taking shape. As the planting was installed, so were the sculptures that Acton had been collecting for years, and which were now the originals of the reproductions he commissioned and sold. His gardens were to become the exhibition space for his outdoor collection of ancient Italian sculptures.[29]

The gardens of La Pietra could not be more eloquently described than by Harold Acton, the eldest son of Arthur Acton and Hortense Mitchell in his book *Memoirs of an Aesthete*. His full account is worth quoting:

> The Villa of La Pietra stands in the middle of Montughi Hill, and its name is derived from a stone pilar, which indicated the distance of one mile from the old city gate of San Gallo. In Italian, villa signifies not house alone, but house and pleasure grounds combined; the garden is an architectural extension of the house.
>
> The walled orchard to the north-east of the house with its large stanzone, or lemon house, was decorated with elaborate patterns of seventeenth century rocaille and mosaics of shells and pebbles in gardlands and festoons The original garden was almost destroyed in the 19th century when so called English gardens were all the rage, and it is ironical that my father, an Englishman, should have restored and reconstructed it on pure Tuscan lines. The process of 'Tuscanization' began just before my birth, and my father refined upon the traces of the former garden and its retaining walls, with all the creative ingenuity of a Cinquecento architect.

[27] Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives. James T. Maher Files. Miami. Florida.

[28] Archives Villa La Pietra, New York University, Florence, Italy.

[29] Schnadelbach, Raymond. 2010*. Hidden Lives, Secret Gardens.* Princeton: Universe Press and LAUD Press.

> The main plan consists of a series of broad terraces, each like a separate garden, levelled from the slope descending behind the house. The first is a long platform with a grey stone balustrade for statues at regular intervals, flanked by stairs on either side which run down the central terrace enclosed by low walls and clipped hedges with niches for other statues. In the center of this lowest terrace are ancient fountains with circular basins, surrounded by stone benches and geometrical plots of grass hemmed in by clipped hedges of box. A mossy staircase paved with colored pebbles descends to the long alley between, with a colonnade roofed in by creepers on the right. Both terraces are planted mostly with evergreens. A peristyle of Corinthian columns screens the lowest terrace from the adjacent vineyard and a statue of Hercules stands vigorously in the center with a pair of venerable cypresses behind him. Many paths running parallel with the hillside lead to stone arches and circular plots enclosed by hedges and statues. The whole garden is essentially green; other colors are incidental. Sunlight and shade are carefully distributed as are the fountains, terraces and statues, and in no other Florentine garden have I seen statues of such individual strength and grace, from the lone Mantuan colossus by Marianelli to the Venetian figures which have stepped on to the open-air theater as for one of Goldoni's comedies. The wings of this little theater are evergreen, also the globed footlights. The statues, collected by my father for many years, deserve a separate monograph; there are over a hundred of them, exclusive of what Nollekens called 'bustos'.It is a garden for all seasons, independent of flowers. The central axis faces Vallombrosa; Fiesole and san Dominico loom on the extreme left.
>
> Ultimately, everything at home revolved round the collection, of which the garden was an open-air extension.[30]
>
> Despite all this, a marble plaque (Figure C-2) erected by Arthur Acton on the wall of Villa La Pietra's garden reads:
> Architectti Consulenti: Stanford White, Charles Platt, Castellucci, Edwin Dodge and H. O. Watson

Strangely, it does not mention Suarez's name or Achilles Duchene, the two men who worked closely with Acton on the making of the gardens. The only explanation that comes to mind is that Acton, who seemed to be haunted by social insecurities,[31] always

[30] Acton, Harold. 2008. *Memoirs of an Aesthete.* London: Faber & Faber Ltd. P. 3,6,207.

[31] Alliata, Dialta. 2013. *My Mother, My Father and His Wife Hortense.Provenance: Villa La Pietra*. California: Amazon.

wanted to show off his connection to the prominent figures of the architectural world. In addition, these men were his clients – they had all helped him build his business of exporting classical *objet d'art.* Giving them credit as consulting architects could have also been a way to show them his gratitude. In addition, Suarez was just a very young man and no one, not even Suarez, could have foreseen the role that he would soon play in American landscape architectural history.

Villa Selva e Guasto. Among the more hidden villas on the road to Fiesole is *Selva e Guasto*, the Suarez family villa. It stands at the intersection of Viale Galileo and Via San Leonardo, at the top of a hill in one of the most sought after addresses in Florence. Prior to coming into the Suarez family ownership, it was the home of Maestro Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), often known simply as Galileo, the Italian physicist, mathematician, engineer, astronomer, and philosopher, who played a major role in the scientific revolution during the Renaissance.[32]

Via San Leonardo is, one of the most prominent streets in Florence. It is known for its narrow-enclosed walls and the severe, yet harmonious architecture of its aristocratic buildings, plunged in the midst of nature, making it one of the most characteristic and evocative roads in the hills around Florence. Many of the buildings are decorated with *graffito*, a technique characterized by decorations on the walls and is created by scraping away a large area of the plaster with rudimentary tools that the craftsmen prepared themselves. It is interesting to note that this *grafitto* technique was used in the boundary walls at Villa Vizcaya leading one to wonder if this was another of Suarez's many cultural contributions imported to the overall landscape scheme that

[32] Orlandi, Giulio Lensi. 1978. *Le Ville di Firenze Di La'D'Arno.* Florence: Vallecchi Editore.

remains at Vizcaya today and that has been credited to Paul Chalfin.[33] In their essay on the Via San Leonardo, Artusi and Giannetti describe it as follows:

> Together with via di Belvedere and Viale Galileo, they form a unique and extremely beautiful walk that combines delightful country atmosphere with a series of refined and elegant elements of interest. Via San Leonardo seems almost to summarize the many beautiful and enchanting roads that wend their way around the Florentine hills. This narrow road, tightly squeezed between walls decorated with extraordinary graffiti, has been, over the years, the inspiration for artists and celebrated by poets.[34]

During the centuries that followed Galilei family ownership, the villa passed through several important families, including the Canigiani, Rucellai, Franceschi, Montaguti and Giorgi families. By 1766, it belonged to Lorenzo Zanobi Feducci, and then to Capacci Castrucci.[35] At the beginning of the twentieth century, the villa was purchased at an auction by Princess Maria Dolgoroukov of Russia[36], a good friend of Maria Costa, Suarez's mother, to whom she left it in her will upon her death in 1919.[37]

In 1976, the Suarez sisters sold the property to Gianni Ponta who subdivided the house into three very generous apartments. He sold two of the apartments, keeping for himself the half of the house that abuts the original formal garden, which Suarez

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[33] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

[34] Artusi, Luciano and Giannetti, Vicenzo. 1997. *Via San Leonardo y la Sua Colina*. Firenze. Semper Editrice.

[35] Orlandi, Giulio Lensi. 1978. *Le Ville di Firenze Di La'D'Arno.* Florence: Vallecchi Editore.

[36] City of Florence Archives.2014. Property Title.

[37] In 1953, *Villa Selva e Guasto* was listed as the official address of the Colombian Consulate General in Florence (Code Diplomatique et Consulaire, Volume 10 n.d.). Roberto Suarez Costa, Suarez's younger brother, held the post of Consul General in Florence, as their father had before him in the early 1880's. Roberto lived with his two sisters, Camila and Lucia Suarez, at the family villa until his death. The two Suarez sisters maintained the villa until 1976 when they sold the property and its contents to Gianni Ponta. The Suarez sisters moved to a small apartment in Florence within view of the Arno River, were Camila died only a few months after leaving the villa. Lucia died several years later, in Florence. With Lucias's death, this Suarez family branch was at the end since none of the five Suarez siblings ever had offspring.

designed before departing for the United States in 1914. Mr. Ponta retained a large portion of the villa's contents and Suarez family heirlooms and continues to own the villa today.

The villa *Selva e Guasto* does not have panoramic views despite its strategic location above Florence. It is however, one of the most welcoming and pleasant villas in the area. A wonderful wall of expertly trimmed cypress behind the perimeter wall surrounds the garden in front of the façade. Box hedges define the entry court, that doubles as a *lemonaia* or citrus court providing warmth and cheerfulness with the great lemon-pots under the windows of the house (Figure C-3). At one corner, the seventeenth century chapel is dominated by a row of swirling cypress trees and a mature white and purple wisteria. The clipped cypress hedges that have graced this villa for generations are pruned to perfection, creating the different rooms that are so characteristic of Italian gardens (Figure C-4). Despite its simplicity and modesty, lacking both statuary and water, the compact garden remains an example of a harmonious and well-planned Italian Renaissance garden dating to the *Second Renaissance Revival Group*.

The name of this villa combines those of its original farms. The first, Selva, from the Latin *silva* meaning forest, evokes the days when these hills were planted with oaks, and other native species, and hosted wolves and wild boars; the second, Guasto, refers to the serious destruction due to looting and raids that these serene hills suffered during the passage of centuries. The grandiose façade (Figure C-4) is of the late seventeenth century, although the villa is much more ancient and dates from the Renaissance.[38]

[38] Orlandi, Giulio Lensi. 1978. *Le Ville di Firenze Di La'D'Arno.* Florence: Vallecchi Editore.

Doris Littlefield, while holding the title of curator of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, described her visit to the villa as follows,

> In 1975 about twenty Vizcaya guides and friends planned a very special tour of Italy… After our tour, I returned to Florence and visited the Suarez sisters at their villa just outside the city on the road to Fiesole. It is in this house where Diego Suarez and his brother and sisters grew up with their widowed mother, where he first practiced his architectural studies by re-designing the entrance façade and a south facing loggia; where he re-designed the gardens. The Suarez gardens are not extensive, but are beautifully laid out, sectioned by precisely trimmed plantings of green hedges – some shaped as tall as columns, others in a spiral form and still others in an undulating high and low pattern. This greenery divides the planted areas into blooming garden with roses, a green garden with flowers in pots, and a parterre garden; the whole bounded by the high wall of the entrance garden and the low wall separating the planted areas from a meadow. The Suarez villa is filled with fine furniture, paintings and quantities of beautiful china, precious porcelains and small art objects. I left with the sisters a number of pictures and slides of Vizcaya which they were planning to share with Sir Harold Acton, the son of Arthur Acton, who had introduced Diego Suarez to James Deering and Paul Chalfin so many years ago.[39]

The beautifully furnished rooms, filled with rare and elegant antiques, overlook the pleasant gardens of the entry court, and even more picturesque and perfectly manicured geometric garden that extends from the small loggia in the upper level, which was also designed by Suarez.[40]

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[39] Littlefield, Doris. 1976. Letter dated November 8,1979. Suarez File. VMG Archives.

[40] Amongst the Suarez family furniture and objects that decorate Mr. Ponta's bedroom is the portrait of General Simon Bolivar in diplomatic garb, painted by Cuban artist, Rita Matilde de la Peñuela also known as Aita (Blanchet 1860), which used to hang over the mantelpiece in the living room of the villa during the Suarez tenure. This painting, gifted by Fernando Bolivar, brother of Simon, to Giovanni Battista Costa and his wife Isabel Dalla Costa y Miranda (Suarez-Niño 2012), Suarez's maternal grandparents, is a copy of the original which hangs today in the National Bank of Venezuela in Caracas.

A portrait of Generalissimo Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816), Suarez's great-great grandfather, the original painted by British artist Lewis Brian Adams (1809-1853), once hung next to Bolivar. The portrait was given to this researcher by Mr. Ponta during her visit to the villa in May 2014. It has been professionally restored and hangs in her home in Totalan, Spain. It is interesting to note that it was this same portrait that led the researcher to locate the Suarez family villa in Florence. A picture of the painting appears in the book, *The Life of Miranda* with a footnote that reads: *General Francisco de Miranda. Portrait by an unknown artist. In the Suarez-Costa-Miranda collection. Villa Selva e Guasto, Florence,*

Villa Schifanoia. Villa Schifanoia sits on one of the hills surrounding Florence on the road to Fiesole. In the early 20th century, the villa belonged to Lewis Einstein, a member of the Anglo-American community in Florence.

> I owe to him [Acton] much valuable advice at the time when I planned and completed two or three gardens in Italy, one of them at Schifanoia, near Florence, today the property of Mr. Myron C. Taylor. It was at Mr. Acton's house that, in the spring of 1914, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. James Deering and Mr. Paul Chalfin. I took Mr. Deering and Mr. Chalfin around Florence, had them visit a few villas and gardens not opened to the general public, and showed them the gardens I had created at Schifanoia.[41]

The villa is referenced in the diaries of Ersilia Beacci[42] and of Iris Origo[43] who each described two different occasions on which the owners were having a masquerade ball. It is this garden that Suarez claims, by his own account, to have designed while he was still living in Florence before his trip to the United States in 1914.[44] An excerpt from Origo's diary reads,

> From time to time one or another of the better-established Anglo-Florentines with a villa, would give a party, with charades and amateur theatricals – The Ballet Russe and Diaghilev's galas influenced all Europe, and fancy-dress balls with tableaux vivants became the fashion. In Florence, in Villa Schifanoia, a ball was held on the theme of the visits of the Shah of Persia to the Doge of Venice, combining Persian and Venetian costumes.[45]

Italy. Reproduced by courtesy of Signor Diego Suarez Costa y Miranda. See: Fernandez, David W., *La Familia de Miranda*, Ediciones del Instituto de Estudios Históricos Mirandino, Caracas, Venezuela, 1972.

[41] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[42] Alliata, Dialta. 2013. *My Mother, My Father and His Wife Hortense.* California: Createspace.

[43] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* David R. Godine Publisher, Boston.

[44] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[45] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* David R. Godine Publisher, Boston. P.47.

The gardens are still intact, and several similarities with Vizcaya can be detected throughout them (Figure C-5). Perfect geometric box hedges fill the elongated rectangular space of the formal stepped garden, while the edges on one side blend into the natural Tuscan forest that surrounds the villa. A fountain laid flush in the ground, with a thick natural carved stone coping, resembles the seashell fountains at the footsteps of the Mound at Vizcaya: a series of statues stand at the entrance of the paved court, as well as within the hedges of the longitudinal sides of the garden. The retaining walls are beautifully detailed to form a geometric shape at its borders and they hold large stone garden vases in typical Italian style.

Like Villa Selva e Guasto, the Chapel is an independent building that serves as the terminus of the entry court. Einstein sold it in 1927 to Myron Taylor, the American ambassador to the Holy See. The Villa and gardens were greatly damaged during World War II. It is believed that Taylor hired Cecil Pinsent after the war when he began restoration of the villa and its grounds.[46] The villa passed through many hands during the last century and today, it is the home of the European University.

Villa Torri Gaittaia. Not far from Villa Selva e Guasto is another of Suarez's Florentine gardens of which only a small remnant survives. This villa, owned during the early 1900's by Charles Loeser, was renovated by its owner to house his large collection of art and antiquities. Suarez was also hired to design the gardens for Villa

[46] Further research has shown that Italian scholar and writer Giorgio Galleti also mentions Cecil Pinsent as being involved with the garden of Villa Schiffanoia. It is likely then, that Suarez and Pinsent worked together in this project, since they both belonged to the Second Renaissance Revival Group. Suarez is never mentioned by either author. See also Macadam, Alta. 2003. *Americans in Florence.* Firenze: Giunti Editore S.p.A.

Torri Gaitaia.[47] Not much is left of the original garden design except for the large *lemonaia* (Figure C-6) that is very similar to the entry court at Villa Selva e Guasto and also to the *lemonaia* at Villa la Pietra that is adjacent to the main house. But it is not the size of this garden that makes it stand out – it is the subtle beauty of its planning, to which time and neglect have added a touch of poetry and where although hardly any trace of the original plan remains, it is easy to imagine what it once looked like. This villa is today the home of the International School of Florence. Edith Wharton notes in her famous account of Italian Villas that the gardens' ruinous conditions contribute to their charm: "It is the glory of the Italian garden-architect that neglect and disintegration cannot wholly mar the effects they were skilled in creating… (so that) while a trace of their plan remains, one feels the spell of the whole."[48] According to Raffaella Fabiani Giannetto:

> It is the same appreciation of the effects of time on a work of art from a distant and glorious past that pervades the rhetoric of the Americans who describe for their fellow citizens the old gardens of Italy at the turn of the twentieth century and who will find them overgrown and sometimes even crumbling, but still exuding a magical atmosphere.[49]

Suarez Travels to America

Lady Sybil Cutting owned the Villa Medici in Fiesole.[50] She was part of the Anglo-American group of wealthy ex-patriots living in Florence at the time and she was

[47] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[48] Wharton, Edith. 1904,2008. *Italian Villas and their Gardens.* New York: Rizzoli and The Mount Press. P. 175,176.

[49] Giannetto, Rafaella Fabiani. 2016. *Foreign Trends in American Gardens.* Charlottsville, University of Virginia Press.P.130.

[50] Lady Sybil Marjorie Cutting, neé: Cuffe, daughter of Hamilton John Cuffe, 5th Earl of Desart and Lady Margaret Joan Lascelles. She married William Bayard Cutting secretary to the US embassy to the Court of St. James's with whom she had one daughter Iris, the Marchesa Origo, author of many books. She

also a widow of American born Bayard Cutting with whom she had one child, Iris Origo, neé Cutting. Lady Sybil would travel every summer to Bar Harbor, Maine, so Iris could visit her American grandparents.[51] In April of 1914, she invited Suarez to join her. The political situation in Europe was beginning to get complicated on the eve of World War I, and Suarez decided to accept Lady Sybil Cutting's invitation to travel to the United States for the first time. Additionally, there were rumors that a draft would be implemented in Italy and leaving at that time would prevent him from being drafted into the Italian army.

Suarez also decided to return to his homeland Colombia on the same trip to America. Suarez had left as a teenager, six years after his father's death, and it was time to reconnect with his paternal family. He made the decision to travel with Lady Sybil to the United States and to continue to Colombia from there. Years later he recalled:

> In 1914, when I was only 26 years old, the future for a professional in the architectural field in Italy, but more specifically in Florence, seemed very limited and problematic. I therefore decided to avail myself of the company of a group of friends who were planning to take a trip to the United States, a country where I had never been, and pay a brief visit on my way to my native country of Colombia, where my family held extensive land interests and to which I had decided to return.[52]

Three months before departing to the United States in May 1914, Acton introduced Suarez to James Deering and Paul Chalfin, and took them on a tour of the

owned the Villa Medici in Fiesole. It was Lady Cutting who invited Suarez to accompany her to the United States in the summer of 1914.

[51] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* David R. Godine Publisher, Boston.

[52] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

various villa gardens which Suarez had designed.[53] It was during these two days of touring the Tuscan and Veneto countryside that Chalfin and Suarez became better acquainted. Upon their departure, both Deering and Chalfin told Suarez that if he ever visited New York, he should contact them. None of them could have imagined then how this brief encounter would eventually affect each one of their lives.

By June 1914, the situation in Europe was unsettling. Lady Sybil and her daughter were spending the summer in London where Suarez would meet them. [54] The group boarded the S. S. Laurentic in Liverpool headed for Quebec, Canada.[55] The ship set sail on August 1st, 1914 for a nine-day transatlantic trip. Four days after they sailed, on August 4, 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. In her biography on Iris Origo, Caroline Moorhead states,

> Sybil and Iris sailed for America on the 2nd of August 1914, to visit the Cuttings at Westbrook. On August 4 all passengers were summoned to the main salon, where the captain announced that England was at war. They docked in New York and Sybil booked passages on the next boat back to Europe, despite the entreaties of the Cuttings. As it turned out, theirs was the last to carry civilians.[56]

The outbreak of war meant Diego Suarez was temporarily stranded in New York.

A Transcontinental Design Dialogue Begins

While in New York, a chance meeting placed Diego Suarez in the same room as Paul Chalfin and James Deering; it was during this meeting that Chalfin invited Suarez

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* David R. Godine Publisher, Boston.

[55] Library and Archives Canada, Genealogy Services Reference Service Division, Ottawa, Canada. Passenger Lists 1865-1922.Reference: RG76, Microfilm: T-4811.Passenger Lists 1865-1922.

[56] Moorehead, Caroline. 2002. *Iris Origo, Marquesa de Val d'Orcia.* David R. Godine Publisher, Boston.P.52.

to his office to view the plans of Mr. Deering's property in Miami, and the house designed by architect, Francis Burrall Hoffman.

> It was then that I accidentally met again Mr. Chalfin, who seemed very much surprised to see me in New York. He became acquainted with my personal situation and asked me to call on him at his office, which I did. There, he showed me a map of the property which Mr. Deering had acquired south of Miami and the plans and drawings of the palatial house which, designed by the eminent and internationally known architect F. Burrall Hoffman, he was in the process of having built. Chalfin asked me to come to see him at his office. He first showed me the general layout of Mr. Deering's estate and then took me to the office of the architect, Mr. Burrall Hoffman. There I saw the architectural models of the splendid villa with its approaches, terraces, farm buildings, gate lodge and boat house. I could see at once that this was a project conceived in the great Italian tradition - the stately house and terraces, the logias and lofty rooms. - the models fired my imagination, and when Chalfin asked me if I thought I was capable of designing Mr. Deering's gardens I knew it was a great opportunity to use all the knowledge and experience I had gained in Italy. Following my inspiration from Italian gardens, my idea for the Deering garden was to build successive levels connected by architectural flights of steps going down from the house toward the lake and the southern end of the property.[57]

Suarez was commissioned by James Deering to create a formal Italian garden within the natural environment that closely resembled its primal condition. The pre-construction vegetation included pine land, heavy hammock, hammock mangrove, palmetto, and prairie. The house and garden were sited between hammock, palmetto, and mangrove. Vizcaya stands at the edge of the Miami Rock Ridge, a unique and visually striking location overlooking Biscayne Bay, spreading from its estuaries to the Rocklands of Coconut Grove. Its climatic conditions were characterized by subtropical maritime breezes. Deering appreciated the natural environment of the site, writing in a 1919 letter:

[57] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

> As you know, I have insisted pretty firmly on having the hammock west of Miami Avenue preserved in its native state. You are also aware that I have asked that whatever might be done to the property south of the causeway, some of it should *be left in its present and natural condition. . . We could explain to visitors that this is our natural and deliberate purpose.*[58]

Suarez's final design of the formal garden is an authentic Italian garden co-existing within the surrounding native sub-tropical landscape. Suarez's main challenge was to tame the Florida hammock to conform Deering's idea of a Mediterranean villa in a tropical jungle. His design solution, inspired on the principles of the Florentine gardens of symmetry, proportion, balance, diversity and unity of forms, materials and details led to the formation of a uniquely Floridian landscape that emerged as a result of his socio-cultural preference for Italian gardens. Harwood, in *The Lives of Vizcaya*, quotes James Deering at a moment early in the project:

> Deering swept aside a pile of plans, pushed back his chair, and said, very well, his villa would be Italian. But he made one exception. His villa, he warned, must not be seen so Italian as to have no flavor of the Florida tropics. It must savor strongly of the Everglades'. He would go on to say: 'to me the charm of this part of the world is the jungle effect, and anything done to interfere with this must be against my wishes and without my knowledge.[59]

By adopting an Italian style for his villa, Deering was effectively adopting a European cultural identity; one tied to the Italian Renaissance when the garden became a space that could and should be humanized. Charles Platt (1861-1933), who first introduced the Italian garden to the United States, wrote in 1894 that:

> To take a piece of land and make it habitable, the architect proceeded with the idea that not only was the house to be lived in, but that one still wished

[58] Letter from James Deering to Paul Chalfin. August 16,1919. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[59] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

> to be at home while out-of-doors; so the garden was designed as another apartment.[60]

In his book, *The Italian Garden*, Luigi Dami mentions that,

> The essential feature on an Italian garden is (according to Leon Battista Alberti) its harmonious connection with the landscape. It does not shut itself against the surrounding country, but tends, wherever circumstances allow, to increase its extension, merging its boundary into the surrounding country – the builder of our garden looks upon nature as rough material to be molded according to his fancies.[61]

The very essence of an Italian garden design is to control nature to create outdoor rooms delineated by hedges and walls. For Suarez to accommodate his socio-cultural preference for the Italian garden, he had to begin by accommodating the formalistic principles of the traditional Italian garden from a hilly to a flat topography and from a Mediterranean climate to a sub-tropical one. For example, rather than designing within the existing flat terrain, Suarez chose to create The Mound that highlights the Italian principle of the raised approach - the notion that the formal gardens should be enjoyed from an elevated place. This decision can be seen as one way which Suarez used to control his design to tame the intense reflection of the sun from the southern lake, while at the same time allowing an elevated view of the garden in the tradition of its Italian forbearers. Suarez described the motivation for his decision as follows:

> The glare of the sun, coupled with the dazzling light, would have made it very uncomfortable and difficult to see anything in the direction of the lake and consequently of the future garden. These observations convinced me that my original design was wrong. . . this led me to conceive a new

[60] Platt, Charles A. 1894;2000*. Italian Gardens.* Sagaponack, N.Y.: Sagapress Inc.

[61] Dami, Luigi. 1924*. The Italian Garden.* New York: Brentano's Inc. Publishers.

> design for the gardens of Vizcaya, which eventually resulted in the creation as they stand today.[62]

By using the existing native vegetation as a backdrop for his formal garden much like the *boscos* that surrounded the Florentine gardens that preceded Vizcaya, Suarez immersed his garden into the immediate surrounding environment, done so naturally and in keeping with his client's wishes but at the same time also being true to traditional Renaissance principles.

On December 21, 1916, Gordon Mackay wrote an article titled "The story of the House that James Deering Built". In it he said:

> The great estate has not been stripped of its virgin verdure, but nature's groupings have been tempered and tampered with to suit an artistic zeal in the creator. There is no home in the United States like this country estate of James Deering.[63]

Despite the fact that everything was altered, transformed or adjusted to its new context, in the end, Vizcaya came together as a coherent composition where Suarez's garden was seamlessly inserted in a sub-tropical jungle.

[62] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[63] MacKay, Gordon. 1916. *The Story of the House that James Deering Built. The Miami Herald*.

CHAPTER 6
DESIGNING VIZCAYA

> I visualized two long vistas directing the eye as far as the lake, leaving between them a higher level or terrace crowned by thick foliage and trees which would act as a screen against the glare of the southern sun. This idea was the basic inception for the plan of Vizcaya such as they stand today.[1]

The vision for Villa Vizcaya is all embracing and holistic ensuring that the design and planning approach provided its owner and visitors with an enhanced quality of life and an environment that was designed to the highest criteria of sustainability and responsible development of its time. It was designed to be distinctive and unique, yet responsive to its site and context without ignoring the social process naturally implicit in the design.

> The gardens are integral to the estate and can be argued as the premier creative element of the property. The creativity, inventiveness, skill and craft they demonstrate are unique. Deering's commitment to the care required to sustain the elaborate gardens was the direct result of their importance to the overall estate.[2]

Its success is based not only on its extraordinary design, integrated with the best aspects of the local setting and environment, but also on an in-depth understanding of the formal Italian style by the architect and landscape architect which provided the foundation for the creative planning and design of Villa Vizcaya.

The overall property is organized in a series of components each with a distinct character that defines the pedestrian friendly character outlined in the masterplan. The design and framework of the gardens, the paths, the lakes and canals ensured that the

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[1] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[2] See *Vizcaya: Cultural Landscape Report and Stewardship & Management Plan* .2011. Prepared for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens by Heritage Landscapes LLC in collaboration with Teresita Falcon, Jose Antonio Bueno and Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

property would enjoy a unique environment in the tradition of the Venetian style that inspired its design yet remaining true to its location and climate. It intentionally gives all the components distinct identities with memorable setting and views.

The masterplan exploits its strategic location on Biscayne Bay providing it with direct boat access from the east as well as vehicular access from the longitudinal keystone ridge on the western side of the property. Pedestrian walkways connecting the various distinct areas of the property on either side of the main access road offer a great variety of visual, spatial and ecological interest as varying quantities and qualities of shade, water, and vegetation create cooling microclimates throughout the site.

The two principal axes, extending basically north-south and east-west through the House serve as the overarching visual organization of the House and Gardens. On the east-west axis is the arrival into the property emanating from South Miami Avenue and terminating with a visual icon, the breakwater barge. The arrival is organized in a series of layers defined by character and hierarchy. One enters the property through a thick layer of hardwood hammock forest on a meandering path that leads the visitor to an upper open court or Piazza offering a stunning view of the villa which hides the bay beyond. A fountain lined approach carved out of the hammock extends from the open court towards the villa over a dry canal which was once the main access road, South Miami Avenue. By moving the road towards the west, a whole layer of hardwood hammock was added to separate the private and secluded nature of the villa from the public road and the farm village. It continues through the Forecourt and up the House steps, through the triple arches, across the Inner Court and through the repeated triple

bayside arched, across the terrace, down the steps, to the centerline of the Boat Island or the Barge.

The north-south axis originates to the north, at the sculpture positioned against the hammock, on the center axis of the North Lawn. This axial line moves up to pass the north façade, enters the house, passes on center through Inner Court, and continues to the center point of the south terrace at which point the cluster of radial axes that organize the Main Garden originate (Figure C-7).

At the heart of the property on the north-south axis is the Italian formal garden designed by Diego Suarez. An added benefit of this garden is the effect of Suarez's basic inception for the masterplan, the Mound, to tame the intense reflection from the southern lake, while at the same time allowing an elevated view of the garden in the tradition of its Italian forbearers. This serves as yet another example of how his socio-cultural identity is reflected in the creation of this artifact. Beyond the Mound and in complete contrast to Suarez's design, the southernmost portion of the property was reconfigured with a more organic design creating smaller channel links and water inlets to provide direct water access for the Venetian gondolas and to more approximate the character of an archipelago, such as Venice.

The axial organization of Vizcaya is especially strong and repeated at multiple levels. This developed geometry drives the overall organization and visual sequence and balance of the gardens. This precise geometry is overlain on the natural communities of Biscayne Bay and the Brickell Hammock that are conserved in part as valued elements of the property.

The well-executed transition into nature from the house to the gardens was enhanced by the tangle of the Tidal Swamp on one side and the lushness of the Rockland on the other. The final masterplan reflects the designer's aim to create a harmonious yet multifaceted plan where the different components interact to create an integrated whole which is greater than the sum of its parts. Vizcaya became a beacon of Western refinement and culture amidst the wilderness of a frontier. The enjoyment and taming of nature manifested itself on acres of formal gardens, picturesque semi wild tropical gardens and virgin groves. The combined enjoyment of all these areas created the original experience of the Villa's landscape.[3]

As Vizcaya's garden was conceived in Suarez's mind, each piece was inspired by very specific gardens he was familiar with. One major influence came from the garden at Villa Gamberaia, which we know now that he knew well. The water parterre at Vizcaya is like the one in this Florentine villa owned by Princess Ghyka. The secret garden, another element incorporated in Suarez's design for Vizcaya, was, by his own account also inspired in the secret garden of Villa Gamberaia.[4]

Other villas that inspired the gardens in general were noted by Suarez as being: Villa Dei Collazzi, Villa Capponi, Villa la Pietra which inspired the theater for Vizcaya, and Villas Guicciardini, Salviati, Marlia and Palmieri, all near Florence and Lucca. In addition, villas in Rome, besides Villa Corsini which we have mentioned, were Villa

[3] Today only the formal gardens and a portion of the original forests remain part of the Vizcaya property. These areas combined to the house make up roughly 30 acres of the original 180.

[4] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

Borghese and Villa Doria. Villa Albani and Villa Caprarola with its celebrated fountains and superb gardens were also sources of inspiration for Suarez.

Creating Topography at Vizcaya

Next, I will examine in detail specific design elements Suarez employed in relation to their sources, demonstrating the unique dialogue of time, place, history, and imagination that culminated in the gardens at Vizcaya.

The Mound

Topography was Suarez's main design contribution to the design for the formal garden of Vizcaya. Suarez's birth in the Andes Mountains as well as his studies in Italy on the early Renaissance gardens and those he designed in the surrounding hills of Florence before arriving to the United States greatly influenced his design for Vizcaya. It could also be, that like the Assyrians in 1500 BC, the nostalgic memory of the mountain environment of his youth amidst the Andes would play a major role in his design for Vizcaya.

> I had only been one or two days walking around the incomplete house and looking at the adjoining grounds when I became aware of the fact that the design and model which I had created in New York were wrong, owing to adverse natural conditions which I was unaware of, by the simple fact that I had not been in the site before. These adverse conditions were as follows:
>
> The most important and beautiful outside view from the house was, and still is, in the direction of Biscayne Bay. But there was an equally important view from the house, namely the view in the southern direction towards the lake.
>
> Now, the house, when completed, was to have and has today, a terrace next to the main living room, looking south towards the gardens and the lake and my first and definite impression, when I stood on that terrace from noon-time on, was that the glare of the sun, coupled with the dazzling light, would have made it very uncomfortable and difficult to see anything

> in the direction of the lake and consequently of the future garden. These observations convinced me that my original design was wrong…this led me to conceive a new design for the gardens of Vizcaya, which eventually resulted in the creation as they stand today.[5]

Later, he goes on to say:

> Following the main axis, beyond the waters of a great pool ornamented with pyramids and stone vases surround the island lawn, connected by two bridges with the adjacent gardens; further a Roman cascade, flanked by steps, ascends to the higher level of the terrace. Heroic figures guard access to deep grottos on either side of the cascade, and these shadowed openings are reflected directly upon the water at the extreme end of the great pool.
>
> Still on the same axis, at the top of the terrace, the view is bounded by the three-arched loggia of the Casino, forming, between the two masses of trees crowning the terrace, the final motive of the perspective. Nothing more charming than this pavilion, a delightfully typical expression of seventeenth-century extravagance, which, like that in the garden of Caprarola, might have sheltered the frivolous amusements or “galanteries” of the court of a great prelate! An open loggia in the center, with a ceiling of the school of Tiepolo, opens directly on the lake and a low far line of shore. On two sides small cabinets, decorated in the taste of the eighteenth century, offer a refuge from the tropical day. Two curved staircases, descending towards the lower level of the garden and the landing on the lake, embrace a grotto occupying the vaulted space beneath the pavilion. Shells, pebbles, and moss cover vaults and walls, and grotesque masks pour water into fountains, to give a contrast of coolness with the sun glittering outside upon the water.
>
> The four extensive groups of clipped trees on the upper terrace hide oval clearings on which lie fountains and water-jets; and radiating paths will open interesting vistas in every direction.[6]

Suarez's decision to create The Mound truly reflects an appropriate aesthetic and functional solution to a topographic problem. A conscious landscape design consists of

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Suarez claims that he wrote the text for this article although his name does not appear on it. See: *The Architectural Review*, Vol. V, No.7, July 1917. *Vizcaya, The Villa and the Grounds*. On authorship of Architectural Review article see letter from Suarez to Mrs. Richard S. Berry dated February 6, 1959 and letter from Suarez to the NYT editor (April-September)1961 and letter from Suarez to Mrs. Robert J. Bohne, April 5,1957. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives. Suarez File.

the decision to accept landforms as they exist or to reconfigure the earth to create new forms in response to the human spatial use of the land.[7] As a young designer, Suarez had the confidence to recognize a design mistake, revise and sell the solution to Chalfin, Deering and Hoffman, creating an alternative that was, and remains, brilliant. He was free to approach the design for the garden solely as an art, but instead, he worked with the tempering of functional and topographic conditions. By creating The Mound, Suarez innovated a man-made form that gained importance as it contrasts with the flatness of the land, whose scale dominates the scene. The Mound emerges organically, becoming a part of the landscape while symbolically linking the garden to the surrounding hills of Tuscany.

The Mound can be described as a design artifact arising from the conflicting impulses of a socio-culturally high-status design preference for Italian Gardens in relationship with a flat landscape and Suarez's compulsion to adhere to European principles. Here again we sense the influence of Suarez's cultural and social context and how it manifests itself through his design.

There are situations in the creation of new landforms where a view of existing features from certain vantage points should be considered as a part of the creative design process. This is the case with The Mound. Suarez made a conscious decision to reject the existing flat land and instead opted to invent a new form in response to the human spatial use of the gardens. He states:

> Here, where the academic code of Italian gardens to be followed, the land would be developed in a descent to the moderately distant lake, which supplants the primitive marsh at the South; but the site imposes the

[7] Lane, Kenneth and Roberts, John.1984. *Fundamental Land*. Ames, Iowa. Iowa State University Foundation.

> opposite treatment - by no means un classic, but as yet undeveloped in America. The house then, instead of looking down upon a lake, looks uphill to its garden center - as the Pitti looks up to the hill of San Giorgio, as the Aldobrandini looks up to its waterfalls; most of all as the Lancelotti looks out across the parterres towards the nearby wooded eminence. Since the parterres and their architecture must be enjoyed in peace, and since with a tropic sun standing day long over the lake, no moment of visual ease could ever be obtained from the house, the high terrace was originated, to be surmounted by great trees which will screen the house from the lake. It will be of interest to northern builders to add that the whole system of terraces and adjacent gardens is also contained enceinte, almost like a fortress thrown against the occasional mad rise hurricane tides. This platform, nowhere less than four feet above the normal high tide, is a veritable bastion.[8]

The main principle behind the drawing of landforms is also the principle of proportion. [9] Suarez's basic approach was to strive for harmony by creating unifying visual qualities among topography, vegetation and manmade elements. While the net result of the form created, The Mound, is a strong geometric one, it does not contrast within the confines of the visual foreground or background of the gardens. This illustrates Suarez's masterful integration of architectural form and landform in an architectonic and holistic manner.

Located in the southern backdrop of the Main Gardens & The Reflecting Pool, The Mound is a prominent land mass, similar in size as the main house, which rises on tall masonry walls with stairway access on all sides. A central set of steps with cascading basins called the Water Stairway is on axis with the house and reflecting pool. Other stairways roll down the cardinal sides of The Mound to lower levels. Secondary steps on the north side of The Mound exit to the ground level at the diagonal corners near the

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[8] The Architectural Review, Vol. V, No.7, July 1917. *Vizcaya, The Villa and the Grounds*.

[9] Lane, Kenneth and Roberts, John.1984. *Fundamental Land*. Ames, Iowa. Iowa State University Foundation.

East and West Shell Fountains. A ramp at the West Vista platform conveys to the lower terrace at the Boat Landing south of The Mound. Subterranean grottos in the walls between the central and side staircases to the north and a cavernous grotto room to the South display relief carvings of Green Men and giants. [10] The interiors of the grottos are inlaid with entire seashells. These features create a pastiche of masonry elements, earth, and vegetation.

Suarez created an expansive and unconstrained grove of mature oaks on top of The Mound which contrasts with the formal, manicured appearance of plantings on the lower level surrounding The Mound. Four Live Oak groves surround the large concrete circle in the center of The Mound. Each grove contains a small central pool with coral rock coping and numerous low ground plantings. Small sculptures, wooden benches, potted palms and other small elements are placed throughout. Along the sides of The Mound, tall trimmed hedges and grass panels organize the space of the East and West vistas. South of The Mound, columns and obelisks rise from a turf ground plane. Rounded Casuarina trees once grown in pots are rooted into the ground near parapet walls at the sides of The Mound and at the Boat Landing near the pond. Other shade tolerant plants grow as undercover in the shade of the Live Oaks on The Mound.[11]

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[10] A Green Man is a sculpture of a face surrounded by or made from leaves. The Green Man motif has many variations. Found in many cultures from many ages around the world, the Green Man is often related to natural vegetative deities. Usually referred to in works on architecture as foliate heads or foliate masks, carvings of the Green Man may take many forms, naturalistic or decorative. The simplest depict a man's face peering out of dense foliage. Retrieved from: http://library.tarvalon.net/index.php?title=Green_Man_Mythology See also Anderson, William. *Green Man: The Archetype of Our Oneness with the Earth*. London: Harper Collins. 1990.

[11] See Vizcaya: Cultural Landscape Report and Stewardship & Management Plan (2011), Prepared for Vizcaya Museum and Gardens by Heritage Landscapes LLC in collaboration with Teresita Falcon, Jose Antonio Bueno and Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

In designing The Mound, Suarez sought to maximize its visual integration into the non-existing topography and to minimize its contrast of form. As the skillful designer that he was, he achieved a harmony limiting the contrast in the topography between the flat land and the man-made elements.

Suarez created a variety of level zones throughout the garden. He created an elevated frame from where to look down at the other elements, and he crowned the frame with The Mound. It is a coincidence that Vizcaya [Bizkaia] literally means 'an elevated place'.[12]

The Barge

The house occupies the upper of two terraces dominating the Bay of Biscayne and the sea, looking towards the Bahamas. The lower of these terraces is prolonged into two symmetrically curved arms of stone, one terminating in a yacht landing and the other in a small *treillage* Casino touched by trees. As requested by James Deering, the main access to Vizcaya would be by boat.

> I made the initial drawings for Mr. Chalfin for the great baroque stone barge or breakwater still standing on the eastern side of the main house and terraces. Mr. Hoffman further developed these designs and completed their execution.[13]

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[12] Letter from James Deering to Paul Chalfin dated December 8, 1914. Vizcaya Museum and gardens Archives. An excerpt from the letter reads as follows: “We have, as you know, fixed on the name “Vizcaya” for the Florida place. The History of the matter is this: Kirk Monroe went with me once to see the land newly purchased land. He then told me about Vizcaya who was the secretary of Ponce de Leon when he came to Florida, and he is supposed to have given his name to Biscayne Bay. When the idea occurred to me after I had left Florida last year that we might use this name, I wrote to Kirk Munroe’s asking him if he would not give me all the history or tradition that he knew in the matter…. A little while ago I had a letter from Kirk Munroe, in which he spoke of Viscino. It would then appear that this was actually the name of the old chap, and not Vizcaya as we had it…So we are up against this alternative: we must falsify the old chaps name or admit that the place is named after the province of Vizcaya. As Vizcaya is much prettier than Viscino, I am inclined to stick to the name and admit the truth about it to any extent that we see fit.”

[13] Ibid.

Deering had a canal dredged directly on the east – west axis where a majestic 158-foot-long stone breakwater would be built for the house's harbor stretching between the arms, providing dock to Venetian gondolas, into which the stone steps of the terrace descend. This breakwater, ornamented with monumental sculpture, fountains, vegetation, and tall pyramids, breaks the glare of the tropic sea by its enriched and surreal profile (Figure C-8). The figures symbolizing the delights and terrors of the sea and the fruits and trees of the tropics were designed by Alexander Stirling Calder, eminent American sculptor. The tall obelisks contrast with the horizon. The barge is another of the several singular artifacts that were brought into Vizcaya.

To fully realize how great this barge is, one needs to imagine that it doesn't exist, and that the villa stares out over an empty void of water just like any seaside house. The barge gives a middle distance and breaks the ocean glare and brings to a fitting climax the great axis that begins at the entrance piazza and, descending an avenue flanked by fountains, crosses the atrium and the courtyard and the vaulted loggia to the sea, the barge and the canal beyond (Figure C-9).

Per Suarez, the barge was inspired by Isola Bella in Lake Cuomo;[14] it has become the iconic image of Vizcaya and the one that Suarez refers to as '*The proudest architectural creation of my life'.* Although by Suarez's own account he was inspired by Isola Bella (Figure C-10) and the original design of the Barge is very similar one could consider that his experience in the transatlantic trips to and from Europe as well as the river boat trip down the Andes through the Magdalena River formed were embedded in

[14] See Maher notes. Interview with Diego Suarez. VMGA #79. Maher writes: Isola Bella's 'obelisks placed like masts guiding the course of a ship'. Note #20 states; "see the stone ship of the Belvedere at the Vatican - a stone ship complete with masts and rigging".

his memory when designing the barge. It was, after all, filled with tropical plants, like those in the banks of the Magdalena river.

The Kasbah

The oriental *kasbah* that Suarez refers to is an extraordinary building of perfect proportions. Its domed roof is an element that shows up again in other Vizcaya garden structures, and in many of Suarez's later buildings.

The kasbah is hidden away in a small corner of a ridge just beyond the edge of Vizcaya's property and surrounded by a thick forest of tropical plants. This temple was built as a garden pavilion on an island within the original Vizcaya gardens for the pure pleasure of enjoyment. It was meant as an ornament to the residence and the landscape. Suarez gave it a classical exterior and a Moorish interior. The 25 feet tall structure is crowned with a dome, an element that reappears in his later architectural work. Its simple square plan projects itself to the sky blending in with its exuberant and somewhat decayed surroundings (Figure C-11). The austere facades are reminiscent of French architects Boulleé (1728 1799) or Ledoux's (1736 -1806) work: perfect proportions, perfect geometry, and perfect location.

Once again creating topography, Suarez placed the *kasbah* atop a series of green terraced steps that lead the visitor up towards the front of the small structure with its iron gate. A pedestal surrounds the four sides of the building serving also as a bench. The pavilion sits on a keystone terrace that extends out in a semicircle repeating the geometry both in section and in plan. A symmetrical set of stairs descends from the back terrace towards what were the lagoon gardens. His cultural roots stemming from images of his youth in Bogota, the Kasbah is comparable to a small pavilion in the Bogota's Independence Park, close to where he grew up in Bogota (Figure C-12).

According to Katherine Chapman Harwood, curator of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens and author of *The Lives of Vizcaya*,

> Chalfin told Deering, Suarez had the 'very clever idea' of using the low hill created from excavations as an eminence on which a 'little domicile' would sit. He was designing a charming Sicilian view house, a Kasbah, small, and exquisite, deceptively simple. A square roof surrounding a dome had a pineapple finial in each corner. There were garlands of carved stucco at the side of oval windows, and a lacework of wrought iron surrounding it. At its back was the lagoon, but in front, from its tall antique doorway, rustic levels descended to a circular plaza and a narrow reflecting pool. Six high, straight trunk palms, each with its fronds, stood sentinel like. The kasbah's floor would be marble. Old seventeenth century African tile was ordered to form a wide wains-coating around the inner walls.[15]

The interior of the Kasbah is covered with the African tile that terminates with a crenelated pattern pointing towards the dome above. Light enters the structure from two small round windows, located one exactly in front of the other on the opposite sides of the gates, also located exactly in front of each other. Two built-in benches were strategically located below the round windows. The floor inside is marble, like the one found in the main villa.

The Statuary Promenades

> An effort has been made to adapt space in the thick forest lying near the house on three sides to form the outer limits of the gardens. The terraces, lateral to the parterres between the house and the Mound towards the lake, stand out against the existing trees in the forest. It is here that the greatest problem of the site must be met.[16]

The elevated frame that bounds the garden on the east and the west was clearly thought of as an exhibition space for the classical statuary that was brought from Europe for the garden, but it also serves as a platform from where to admire the

[15] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.

[16] *Classical America,* No. 3, 1973, Long Island City, New York.

parterre's de broderie, Suarez carefully designed this to give the garden the baroque touch rarely seen in Italian renaissance gardens where severe geometric patterns formed the classical outdoor rooms that were the typical of their time.

The Secret Sunken Garden

> Leaving the arches of the southern Loggia, from the fan like vistas of the garden radiate, one descends by a series of wide steps onward the level of the parterres extending to the mound. Near at hand a door to the left gives access to a secret sunken garden, surrounded by walls and stairs and high foliage, and devoted to orchids, were water dripping in small grottos, brings coolness to the visitor.[17]

Perhaps one of Suarez's most controversial moments during his design for the gardens was the iron railing that Paul Chalfin switched out of Suarez's design that originally called for a traditional stone balustrade as those typical of Italian Renaissance gardens. In an account of his experience while at Chalfin's studio, Suarez vividly recalled,

> Another unpleasant matter: Mr. Chalfin, who was not an architect, had named as head of what he claimed to be an architectural firm in New York, Mr. Ralph Allen, a pretentious and domineering man who had studied architecture but had never been in Europe and had as much idea of a classical garden as I might have had of China. This gentleman interfered with my design of the secret garden (inspired by the secret garden of Villa Gamberaia) and changed the typical Italian and classical stone balustrades to iron railings, as they stand today, a discordant note in those lovely surroundings.[18]

Today, when standing inside the secret garden, one can see why Suarez was not happy with this change (Figure C-13). The iron railings, while beautiful, are distressing and inappropriate. The stone planters and the entrance grotto originally designed for

[17] The Architectural Review, Vol V, Number 7. 1917*. Vizcaya, The Villa and Grounds.July.* Accessed 2013. http://www.archive.org/stream/architecturalrev05bostuoft#page/120/mode/2up

[18] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

Deering's orchids are empty. However, the beautifully-proportioned outdoor room continues to pay tribute to its designer and one cannot help but notice the similarity with the one that inspired it: the secret garden at Villa Gamberaia.

The secret garden is the only enclosed space within the formal garden. Here again, Suarez sought inspiration from the secret garden at Villa Gamberaia, but one cannot help consider that the enclosed patios of the Spanish homes he grew up in as well as those of the Italian *palazzos* could have had some influence in his design. In addition, his native country is known for the vast variety of orchids that gained it the title of its national flower.[19] Suarez was very familiar with this type of plant.

The Teatrino and the Maze

> A rustic theater; a maze; open spaces in the middle of the forest; avenues and piazzas; meandering canals, complete this remarkable scheme, where the architect utilizes all the advantages of the site, has overcome its difficulties, and respected Nature.
>
> The luxuriant flora adds its beauty to the ensemble, and while some tropical trees give an exotic note, they will be as but traces left on the scheme by successive generations; just as a treasured palm brought by some ancestor is found imprisoned in sheltered gardens as far north as Versailles.[20]

Inspired by the *teatrino* of the Villa La Pietra in Florence, the small outdoor theater at Vizcaya (Figure C-14) is shaped as an oval inserted on the eastern edge of

[19] Colombia has the largest number of Orchids in the world, with more than 4.000 different species of which 1.543 are only found in Colombia. The Cattleya is the flower for which orchids are known worldwide. There are several species in Colombia, most of them endemic, but *Cattleya trianae* is the one most commonly found throughout the country named after the Colombian naturalist José Jerónimo Triana and it was selected as a National symbol by botanist Emilio Robledo. Orchids of different colors, shapes, textures and sizes proliferate in almost the entire country, although the area of greatest population lies in the Andes, at altitudes between 1.000 and 3.000 meters. Retrieved from : http://www.colombia.co/en/this-is-colombia/environment/7-interesting-facts-colombian-orchids

[20] Vizcaya, The Villa and Grounds. *The Architectural Review*, Vol V, Number 7. 1917.July. Accessed 2013. http://www.archive.org/stream/architecturalrev05bostuoft#page/120/mode/2up

the gardens, hidden away from the vast open central space. It is accessible through a path that extends from the rose garden to the east terrace of the house, or, directly from the statuary walk through a series of steps leading down towards the seating area. The stage is set against the thick mangrove forest of Biscayne Bay and framed by two stone statues. Although distinctively different from that at La Pietra, one cannot help but envision its predecessor that Suarez frequented regularly during his tenure with Acton both as his garden designer and as his guest during the many masquerade balls organized at the villa. This design element is a clear indication that his period at La Pietra directly influenced his design for Vizcaya.

The Rose Garden

> To either side of the Mound, ramps descend to right and left of the oval lawn between the top of the Cascade and the Pavillion. The ramp on the left leads directly to the Rose Garden, designed in the shape of a vast hemicycle, and ornamented at the center with a fountain, which in the past reared its monumental sculpture, and its baroque basins above the piazza of a town in the territory of Viterbo.
>
> A system of canals flush with the ground, for the growth of aquatic plants, forms a contrast of color with the roses in the many surrounding box-edged plots. Secondary fountains silhouette their sculpture against the high hedges enclosing the half circle of the garden. An interruption in this wall of verdure, with piers and iron grilles, opens a vista towards a Causeway, traversing the property beyond the lake. This latter vista follows one of the axes radiating from the center of the southern façade of the house. Tennis courts open on either side and a marine garden is laced upon its axe.[21]

[21] Vizcaya, The Villa and Grounds. *The Architectural Review*, Vol V, Number 7. 1917.July. Accessed 2013. http://www.archive.org/stream/architecturalrev05bostuoft#page/120/mode/2up

Again, this area of the garden is very similar to its counterpart at villa La Pietra.[22] The system of canals, flush with the ground, have been planted with aquatic plants, but no roses exist in the rose garden. One cannot help but connect this system of canals to those of the Spanish-Moorish gardens so familiar to Suarez in his youth.

The Marine Garden

The Marine Garden is barely visible through the iron grilles that now keep visitors out of this dilapidated structure, half of which is located outside the property line of Vizcaya. The tennis courts no longer exist, but like the neglected gardens of Villa Torri Gaittai in Florence, it is the subtle beauty of its planning to which time and neglect have added a touch of poetry, and where the visitor can still imagine what it once looked like when it housed a diverse population of tropical fish for the kitchen of James Deering's estate.

Garden Artifacts

With regards to other garden ornaments, some were bought by Deering in Europe and strategically located by Suarez within his master garden plan. Others were probably designed by Suarez: the keystone balustrades; the keystone orchid planters of the secret garden; the shell fountains; the bridge; and many others of which small remnants remain, scattered around the abutting property now owned by the Archdiocese of Miami. All these have many similarities with the gardens designed by Suarez in Italy.

> I returned to New York and drew a plan according to this new conception. This plan was gradually developed into models of the different elements

[22] The rose garden today has been altered by eliminating the originally-planned geometric hedges and replacing them with patches of lawn to maintain the design intent conceived by Suarez but to reduce the maintenance cost required by the original manicured hedges.

> which composed the gardens; we planned the long reflecting pool and the water cascade inspired on the Villa Corsini in Rome; the pavilion on the lake; the baroque contours of the terrace on the lake; the ramps in the Italian manner, one of them leading from the terrace toward the rose garden in the midst of which a fine Italian fountain was erected; the "rocaille" garden to the left of the main vista; the "Theatre de Verdue" and the Oriental Kasba. Finally, I personally made the design and the working drawings for the entire parterre work and scroll box designs of the garden as can be seen today at Vizcaya.[23]

Elements such as the orchid planters are so attuned to the climate and needs of the plants themselves that it is difficult to discard the fact that Suarez must have been very familiar with these plants. The way that Suarez cleverly designed the stone pockets within the secret garden is a clear indication of his knowledge about the best environment for growing orchids. Colombia's national flower is the orchid and the country holds one of the largest varieties of orchids in the world. One cannot help but think that his upbringing in Colombia had some influence when faced with the task of designing a special place for Deering's orchids.

Suarez brought a distinct classical design to the American landscape that evolved from his knowledge of classical art and architecture acquired in Europe and from memories of his youth in a tropical environment. This allowed him to seamlessly blend his professional training with his cross-cultural background to produce a product that is classical in a sub-tropical environment.

[23] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION: THE INFLUENCE OF THE ANDEAN AND TUSCAN LANDSCAPE ON SUAREZ

This study is a fresh and comprehensive examination of the socio-cultural evolution of Suarez through the two different epochs in his life in relationship to the landscapes he experienced prior to Vizcaya and how they later influenced his most important landscape design to satisfy a socio-cultural need. It provides a convincing argument for the origins of the Italian garden he designed for James Deering and how these two different cultures were woven into the major feature dominating his design.

Suarez's relation with the Andean and Tuscan landscape and his experience at the *Accademia di Belli Arti* in Florence were discussed earlier in Chapter IV. However, it is necessary to revisit these issues in the context of the design for Vizcaya, to explain the cultural underpinnings of what was for him a vast and complex undertaking.

José Asuncion Suarez, his cousin, recalls that Suarez's fascination with landscape began when he was just a young boy. While growing up in Bogota he enjoyed a relatively close relation to the agrarian landscape that was much closer to the city in the form of his family's *haciendas*. Indeed, a city with a limited amount of public green space, but rich in views of distant mountains, may have had an impact on the young Suarez.

When Suarez was seventeen, he moved to Florence with his mother and siblings. As a result, this direct connection to the Andean countryside was replaced by that of the Tuscan landscape. As an architectural student at the Accademia, Suarez encountered a landscape that differed substantially from the landscape of his youth. He would be trained under the classical school of which the Accademia was singularly

devoted, a style that was not totally unknown to him given the wave of Beaux-Arts architecture built in Bogota while he was growing up.

Before discussing the socio-cultural dimension in Suarez's projects further, it is important to examine the larger historical context by understanding the very specific Andean and Tuscan landscapes that surrounded him during the years preceding his design for Vizcaya. Those are landscapes that he unconsciously or consciously carried over to the United States for his American projects.

The Flat Lands

Europeanization of the Savannah of Bogota. Towards the end of the 19th century, the Savannah of Bogota was drastically transformed and tamed with respect to its original natural condition by an elite landowner group of people. For the historical period that interests us (1880-1910), the Savannah was the seat of an important population mainly engaged in agricultural activities.

Clearly and because of its latitudinal position, it is a tropical (or equatorial) ecosystem. It is a tropical biome composed of extensive pastures and scattered trees in which large-sized herbivorous inhabit'.[1] The vegetation cover, consisting of pastures, crops and some relics of forests, all derive from human construction. The native vegetation was completely modified towards the last two decades of the 19th century, in a period that some have labeled the 'Europization' of the Savannah.[2]

[1] Codazzi, Augustin, 2003. *Situación, Extensión y Población. Geografía Física y Política de la Confederación Granadina*. Vol II. Bogotá. Universidad Nacional, Alcaldía de Bogotá, D.C., Gobernación de Cundinamarca. P. 219.

[2] Delgado Rozo, Juan David. 2010. *La Construccion Social del Paisaje de la Sabana de Bogota 1880-1890.* Tesis Magister en Historia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Bogota: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

It is because of this phenomena that it is important to look for another form of characterization of this space, one that is more socio-cultural, more humanized, that is not defined by the fact that it is a flat land devoid of trees but based on accumulated historical cultural features embodied in its territory. That is to say, this context represents a socio-spatial construction created by individuals or social groups in a determined period, and perceived by those who inhabited it during the late 19th century.[3]

One of these individuals, Tomas Rueda Vargas, whose vision is likely to have represented much of the landowner elite of the time said that, "the Savannah of Bogota is confined to the plains located to the west of Bogota, were the River Funza acts as its structural axis, and in its epicenter lies the city that bears its name (Funza), formerly called Bogota."[4] Alexander Von Humbolt (1769-1859) on the other hand, described the Savannah as "a vast plain, almost devoid of trees […] with small hills which emerge as islands from the land once covered by water."[5]

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[3] From this perspective we refer to a different Savannah, where the cost of travel involved one or more days of on the road, because despite the flat topography, and relatively short distances, obstacles like swamps and wetlands, as well as the state of the roads which during the rainy season were made impassable. This leads me to consider that, as was the case with the Mediterranean that Braudel illustrates in the 16th century, the nineteenth-century Savannah was a huge space, a world in itself, because of the relative isolation it found itself due to the means of transportation and the state of the roads. Similarly, the spatial-temporal notions of its inhabitants were different from those of contemporary times; we can say that they more diluted and inaccurate. In this regard see: Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean: Space and History.* On the different social perceptions of space and time, which vary in space and in the time, see: David Harvey, *Between space and time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination* in: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 80, no. 3 (Sep.,1990)*, pp. 418. 434. By way of example, Marc Bloch shows as in the Middle Ages that the perceptions of time were much more vague, diffuse and dilated when compared, for example, with precision and fragmentation of the time in "industrial" societies. In this regard see Marc Bloch, *La Sociedad Feudal,* México: Unión Tipográfica Editorial Hispano-Americana, 1958. p.86.

[4] Botero, Juan Carrasquilla. 1989. *Quintas y Estancias de Santafe de Bogota.* Bogota: Banco Popular.

[5] Humbolt, Alexander Von. 1981. Descripcion de la Sabana de Bogota. In *Alejandro de Humbolt en Colombia, Extractos de su obra compilados, ordenados y prologados con ocasion del centenario de su muerte en 1859*, by Enrique Perez Arbelaez, 170. Bogota: Instituto Colombiano de Cultura.

Through millennia, the sedimentary contributions of the watersheds located above the Savannah sedimented the lake, a process that culminated in silting that led to the creation of the plain dotted by beautiful wetlands and residual lakes. The landscape of these low and flooded areas is today both highly polluted and degraded and it took a substrate of the Bogota elite to idealize these lands and compare them with European landscapes.

Jose Cordobez Moure described the Savannah's landscape of the late 19th century as follows: "to find in the world a superior perspective of beauty, there is need to go and look for it near the lakes of Garda or Cuomo in Italy."[6]

The "Europeanization" of this landscape by a social group into what they saw as a civilized and tidy landscape was attributed to some extent to its climatic and aesthetic similarities with landscapes found in the Old World. It is in this so-called Europeanized milieu that Suarez was born into and where he spent his early life and youth.

In the second half of the 19th century, liberal reforms produced a severe blow to the forms of corporate and communal property in the Savannah of Bogotá and in other regions of the country.[7] Such reforms saw in the vast extensions designated as Indian reservations and Church property a backward form of land use, a colonial legacy that

[6] Moure, Jose Maria Cordovez. 1899. *Reminiscencias de Santafe de Bogota*. Bogota: Guillermo Amórtegui Editores.- Moure also provides testimony of the biodiversity towards end of the 19th century in the area surrounding this lagoon where he says: "reclining on the Western skirt of the beautiful Hill of Serrezuela, the old house of the hacienda of La Herrera dominates the beautiful and spacious Lake fed by waters of the Bojacá and Serrezuela rivers, where one finds an abundance of fish, crabs, and were thousands of water fowl abound that live frolicking among the stalks and weeds that dress the islands which rise from its waters, as floating corsages where a diversity of animals inhabit as if they were members of the same species and family."

[7] Contemporary historiography mentions this process concerning the dispossession of the land in: Mejía Pavony, Germán.*Los años de cambio: historia urbana de Bogotá 1820 – 1910*. Bogotá: Ceja, 2000. See also Moure, Jose Maria Cordovez. 1899. *Reminiscencias de Santafe de Bogota.* Bogota: Guillermo Amórtegui Editores.

should be abolished. They considered an injustice that indigenous and mestizos peoples of the Savannah, now seen as "citizens", could not own individual properties. This prompted the liquidation of these reservations by distributing the land among its people under the scheme of private property. Indians and Mestizos, who formed most of the population who inhabited the rural areas of these Highlands, were precipitately converted into individual owners, giving them the ability to sell their lands.

This situation quickly fueled ambition and speculation on the part of landowners and regional chiefs, who wanted to access new lands at low prices, a process that they gradually achieved with the previously mentioned legislation. These land acquisitions created an area of vast *haciendas*, owned by traditional Bogotanean families who would begin the transformation of the Savannah into what Alfred Crosby has called “New Europe”.[8] The introduction of plants, animals, and European forms of production transformed ecologically and scenically large areas of America with similar climatic conditions to European ones, such as the Southern Cone of South America, but also the Equatorial Highlands like the Savannah of Bogota (Figure C-23).

This new landowner group constructed and imposed a new landscape, a way of seeing the Savannah that would legitimize and perpetuate their interests founded mainly in the possession of land and the type of use given to it. Therefore, the image of a "Europeanized" landscape was intended to promote an aesthetic order that at the

[8] Crosby, Alfred. 1999. *Imperialismo Ecológico: La Expansión Biológica de Europa, 900–1900*. Barcelona: Critica.

same time was environmental, socio-economic and political, which would legitimize the monopoly, by a social class, of the land and resources of the Savannah at this time.[9]

Despite the promotion of the modernization of the Savannah and the introduction of animals and plants from Western Europe, in the late 19th century the *hacienda* appears as a central element that manages to monopolize the majority of the flat lands, the waters and the forests of the Savannah, leaving the peasant masses without access to land and thus plummeting them to misery in the countryside and the city. Therefore, the *hacienda* emerges as a complex productive unit that is clearly territorial and that to some extent produces the rural landscape of the late nineteenth century.

Jorge Mendez Munevar commented that “The history of the *haciendas* of the Savannah is linked to the city of Bogota. While Bogota was the epicenter that gave life to a whole epoch, from colonial times to the creation of the Republic, this history was intimately linked to the *haciendas* that surrounded the city, at a political, economic and social level.” [10]

With independence from Spain, the taste for all things French arrives to Colombia, introduced by Bolivar and Santander (both ancestors of Suarez), who admired that country profoundly. This new taste was reflected not only in the new way of thinking but also in the lifestyle of an elite group of Colombians. The small Spanish

[9] See also Julio Arias Vanegas, *Nacion y Diferencia*; Denis Cosgrove, *Social formation and Symbolic Landscape* and James Duncan, *The City as Text.*

[10] Pavony, German Rodrigo Mejia. n.d. Los años del cambio: Historia Urbana de Bogota, 1820-1910.

courtyards and gardens left over from colonial times were gradually transformed into a new Republican look.[11]

The haciendas maintained their courtyard layout of the classical Andalusian patio with a central fountain cladded with Moorish tiles, surrounded by orange trees and pots with geraniums, hydrangeas and jasmine. However, in the outdoor gardens, new rooms full of flowers separated by perfectly trimmed hedges begin to appear in a mixture of styles that evoke the Italian Renaissance combined with the Moorish designs. The fountains are fed by natural springs and the Andean mountains can be seen from different viewpoints.[12]

The Republic inherited what geographically and economically was left over from colonial times including the fact that the best lands and the highest concentration of *haciendas* for agriculture and livestock were in the Savannah of Bogota. The advent of the Republic changed very little with respect to access to the countryside was concerned. The colonial *hacienda* is derived from medieval notions of ownership and exploitation of the land. During the "Republican" period (from the mid19th century until the early 20th century), many colonial *haciendas* passed, to a greater or lesser degree, through a process of formal and technological transformation. Likewise, the emergence of several new houses built in this Republican period with a technical and formal language decisively different from that established by the colonial traditions make up what might be called the distinctive mark of this time.[13]

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[11] Cobo-Borda, J.G. and Mejia-Hernandez, C. 1996. *Jardines de Colombia*. Edited by Bejamin Villegas. Bogota. Villegas Editores.P. 218.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Saldarriaga, Alberto.1995 *Casa Republicana*. Edited by Benjamin Villegas. Bogota. Villegas Editores.

The transformation that eventually affected the volumetric exterior of the *haciendas* started in the 19th century and had very different origins than those of the colonial times. The eclecticism or the choice and mixture of elements or architectural motifs of multiple and mixed provenances that replaced the formal unanimity dominant until then had no technological or traditional origin, but instead a commercial and superficially aesthetic one. The eclectic mixes that arrived in Colombia were not the result of a social consensus or of entrenched customs, but of economic impositions by the industry and the "free trade" of some European countries (France, England, Italy, and to a lesser extent Germany, and even Spain itself), as well as the United States. Rural architecture was now a source of consumption for products mass produced by the "Industrial Revolution ".

To the colonial house of the *hacienda*, like those of its counterparts in towns and cities throughout the country, flat ceilings, rosettes, moldings, medallions, etc. were applied to its interiors. The humble and beautiful interiors of the colonial roofs with exposed beams of native tree species were covered by a bourgeoisie mask of plaster of Paris. The rustic surface of interior walls received the universal finish of the imported wallpapers, ‘The mural decoration of the small bourgeois’. Persian rugs replaced the natural fiber mats lying on adobe or brick floors also replaced with new parquet floors in French woods. Finally, the exterior facades were transformed with cornices, downspouts, and other decorative architectural items.[14]

In short, rural architecture could not escape the industrialized gentrification or the underdeveloped version of every aesthetic decoration of easy acquisition abroad. It was

[14] Ibid.

all about the complicated transition from artisanal construction to catalog architecture that could be ordered from a specialized warehouse, directly from Europe or the United States. Another important transformation was the transition from the latrine in the backyard to the French bathroom, and the effects of the emergence of such exotic technologies as ceramic gres and iron pipes or the importation of cutting moulding machines to manufacture wood moldings or to bend iron bars to replace the existing modest plank doors and cow leather (instead of glass) windows all of which were the classic components of the colonial *hacienda* house.[15]

By the end of the 19th century, the old hacienda house had gone from being a noble, efficient and humble working tool to the unpredictable category of social class symbol or insignia. Certain architectural features of the Republican hacienda house were abandoned, such as the traditional spatial organization schemes with their geometric informality generated by family use and daily necessities, in favor of a volumetric organization of environments based on the imposition of abstract geometric principles such as symmetry with respect to a single central axis, in two or three dimensions. It is rare to detect in a house of a colonial hacienda some indication or intention of symmetry whereas almost all of those of the Republican era were designed with access roads that, instead of going around the house, as it was traditionally used, to enter from behind, reach the main facade from its center and required a staircase and an entry gallery in the front. Undoubtedly, in a vague and undefinable way, the notion

[15] Ibid.

of elegance, of formal refinement, made its entry into the history of the Colombian hacienda houses.[16]

Dating back to the second half of the 19th century, the spatial scheme of the hacienda house was previously established and deliberately based on a longitudinal axis and a rigorously symmetrical façade. The symmetry in this case is not an overlap with the existing structures but an original attribute, created for a bourgeoisie of high social class whose level of culture already presented cosmopolitan visions, and who had an elitist and novel idea about the new house he wanted to build. Instead of a hacienda house, it should be a country estate, of unusual elegance (for the Savannah of Bogota) that featured a row of Cypress trees brought from France to be planted in the approach to the house, a rod iron gate and a cortile for the arrival of the car, also symmetrical, in front of the main entrance. The aesthetic-social transformation of the hacienda house reached its peak in the last three decades of the 19th century.

Undoubtedly, the most serious thing that happened to the houses of the colonial hacienda during the modernization process of the late 19th century was the loss or deformation of their immediate environment. This affected the most important characteristic of the house, the relationship between itself and the natural space that surrounded it. The logging of old trees and the demolition of surrounding walls were the main attacks to the surrounding garden of the hacienda house. The first takes place on the pretext of clearing an area around the house to install a designed garden and parking space for cars. The second was done with the pretext of removing obstacles that would impede the view. It is at this moment that the Italian-French gardens are born

[16] Ibid.

in the savannah of Bogotá in the last decade of the 19th century and during the first of the 20th century.[17] It was also at this time that Suarez spent much time in the savannah of Bogota in his own family's haciendas. Without doubt, these transformations of the landscape would influence his aesthetics and spark his interest in architecture and landscape.

The Hill Country: the Surrounding Landscape of Florence

Florence is much larger than just Florence. It extends beyond its medieval fabric into the hills that surround it. It lies in a basin formed by the hills of Careggi, Fiesole, Montughi, Settignano, Arcetri, Poggio Imperiale, and Bellosguardo. The style of the Florentines, their way of conceiving space and time, the way in which they organize their dealings with objects and animals, the measured and apparently simple idea they had about how houses and churches should be build. All this radiated out from the city toward the hill country that surrounds Florence. The factor that most of all marks the countryside around Florence consists of a remarkable balance of man and nature, an equilibrium that has been established and maintained for many centuries.

Even as early as the 14th century, the great profusion of rich palaces, towers, courtyards and walled gardens that could be found in the areas immediately surrounding Florence led travelers to think that, as local chronicler Giovanni Villani (1275-1348) wrote, Florence was twice its actual size.[18]

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[17] Cobo-Borda, J.G. and Mejia-Hernandez, C. 1996. *Jardines de Colombia*. Edited by Bejamin Villegas. Bogota. Villegas Editores.

[18] Villani provides modern historians with valuable details on Florentine social and living habits, such as the growing trend and craze of wealthy Florentines in building large country homes far outside of the city. Goldthwaite, Richard A. (1980). *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

This area, known as ‘The hill country’, later housed the Second Renaissance. This group of men and women came to the abandoned farmland of Tuscany in the Arno River Valley from the growing cities of London, New York and Boston and were not necessarily trying to escape from the ills of urban living, nor were they seeking a nostalgic return to an agrarian past. They were looking for a rural retreat, a quiet place where they could work and enjoy the congenial company of friends. And they brought with them a desire to lead the civilized lives to which there were accustomed in their homelands.[19]

Members of the community built and renovated their houses and designed formal, geometric gardens. This ideal landscape had its origins in their own attention in classical antiquities. This feeling increased as they created a new landscape by imposing their urban and aesthetic interests on the rural landscapes in their house and garden designs. Community members formed attachments to Florence by associating themselves with the Renaissance past and an idealized present. They did so by immersing themselves in this foreign culture they admired. These artists and writers, bringing with them an eye for the beautiful, created a new cultural landscape that expressed their particular tastes and interests in the classical tradition. They preserved parts of the old landscape and introduced foreign elements to change the look of the land. They designed formal gardens with flowers and built new houses or adorned existing ones with classical details and to take advantages of the views and the weather. No longer supporting the livelihood of its inhabitants, the land was redesigned

[19] Cambell, Katie. 2009. *Paradise of Exiles.* London: Frances Lincoln Limited.

for a new lifestyle. Despite the introduction of new elements, the new landscape remained essentially rural.

This was the landscape that Diego Suarez encountered when he arrived to the Hill Country in Florence. Coming from a flat landscape in a tropical climate surrounded by distant views of tall mountains Europeanized by a Colombian elite, to a hilly landscape restored by an Anglo-American group to its original Renaissance gardens with a modern twist.

These two distinct situations would converge in Suarez's design in Miami. The site for Villa Vizcaya was, in fact, a flat piece of land that was being Europeanized by imposing an Italian Renaissance design in a sub-tropical climate. There was, however, one element missing to complete the full picture: The Mound. It would be the one feature that Suarez introduced to the garden that ultimately became his signature piece: the one element that unarguably came from Suarez; the one element that links Suarez; to the savannah of Bogota and to the Hill Country of Florence.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Finishing the Story: Suarez After Vizcaya (1917-1937)

During the three years after Suarez left Chalfin's office, his whereabouts remain unaccounted for. It seems that he worked for McKim, Mead and White.[1] It is also possible that he returned to Europe and continued to work with Acton, and perhaps the Second Renaissance Revival Group[2] in designing and developing gardens in Florence. Perhaps he went to Paris, where he had family and friends and where it is known that he lived at some point.[3] However, in 1921, his name reappears as De Suarez Architect, with his own architectural studio located at 347 Madison Avenue, New York.[4]

In 1922, Suarez joined a previous colleague from Chalfin's office, John Hatton, to create the firm, De Suarez & Hatton, located at 527 5th Ave., and later, between 1924 and 1925, moved the office to 220 5th Ave.[5] Little is known about John Hatton. In the report prepared by the Landmark Preservation Commission on June 20, 2006, on the

[1] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers.* University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia andand Maher notes at the VMGA.

[2] It was in 1918 that his mother inherited the family villa in Florence from Princess Dolgoroukov. In an e-mail to the author, Dialta di Montereale said he worked with Acton until about 1921.

[3] Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos. 1985.*Semblanza de Alberto Manrique Martin.* Ediciones PROA Ltda.

[4] It is interesting to note that Suarez was born as Diego Suarez Costa, the 'De' Suarez appearing only upon his arrival in the SS Laurentic to the United States. His naturalization papers 1931 in the United States show his name as "Diego Suarez, also known as Diego De Suarez". He gives his birth name on the naturalization form as Diego Suarez Costa and appears to have signed the form "Diego De Suarez". The 'De' (with capital D) denotes noble origin. Maria Costa and her sister Isabel were both referred to as Countesses. Their brother, who was mayor of Milan in 1933, was also referred to as Count Costa (Fernandez 1972).An assumption could be that Suarez's use of this nobiliary particle was a clear strategy upon his arrival to the United States when, at the time, it would have been a social distinction that might impress a certain strata of clientele, because of the fact that he was of Hispanic origin.

[5] AIA Archives, New York City.

Astoria Park Pool there is a brief account of a John Hatton, believed to be Suarez's associate in the firm that states: [6]

> He was born in 1886 in Iowa, and first appears in New York City directories in 1915. His professional training remains undetermined, but he practiced architecture in New York City into the late 1940s. In addition to the Astoria Pool, his other works for the Department of Parks in the 1930s include the Betsy Head Pool in Brooklyn and Pelham Bay Park golf clubhouse. In the 1940s, he was considered an expert in store modernization (lighting, space layout, customer comfort, display, fixtures, and storefronts) and his designs for commercial spaces and storefronts were published in several architectural periodicals. Among his clients was the Stetson Hat Company. He also did work for the New York City Housing Authority in the 1940s.

Suarez seemed to have focused completely on his architectural career during the 1920's and 1930's but his partnership with Hatton lasted only from 1921 to 1925. During these few years, the firm completed several projects in New York City, including: the house for Ada Louise Kendrick; the Swift, Seaman & Co. Building Renovation; the McLean Residence; the town homes located at 173 East Seventy Fifth Street and probably others that have yet to be found. It seems Suarez also travelled frequently to Paris, Florence and Bogota during this period.

Records on the De Suarez & Hatton partnership are sparse, mainly since architectural projects were archived by address or construction license number and not by the name of the architect(s). However, some information has surfaced in publications crediting De Suarez and Hatton regarding a few of the properties they designed during this time. It is worth noting that these publications appeared in prominent sources like *Architectural Review*, the *New York Times* and others that the author was able to track

[6] Landmarks Preservation Commission. June 20,2006, Designation List 377, LP-2196 Retrieved July 20, 2012 from: http://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/2196.pdf

down. These publications appeared, along with other important contemporary architects of the time, long before he was married to Evelyn Marshall,[7] confirming that it was his talent that made him rise above the pack and not his marriage into old money as some have led to believe. It is also worth noting that Suarez himself had an impeccable pedigree and does not seem to have had any financial difficulties during his lifetime. The author is confident that Suarez's and Hatton's bodies of work are likely much greater, and records remain to be discovered.

Suarez's landscapes in his architectural production

Italian Epoch 1907 – 1914

Despite having practiced as a landscape architect in a limited way after leaving Vizcaya, Suarez's architectural projects included interior and exterior spaces that worked as part of a comprehensive program in which landscape and garden elements comprised an important component. This is significant because it suggests that the landscape dimension of Suarez's work was forever present in his architectural projects stemming from the socio-cultural background of his youth.

Traces of this can be seen in some of the projects he designed in New York. Such is the case with the McLean Residence where, unlike other similar projects of the time, Suarez's treatment of the building clearly left room for a small formal rear garden (Figure C-15).

This is also the case with the residential building planned for 76th street, where Suarez's treatment of the floor depicts what could have been a garden. The floor mimics a formal parterre as a way of engaging the landscape, a sign that Suarez was thinking

[7] Publications appeared between 1922 –1928. Suarez married Evelyn Marshall in 1939.

of landscape (a socio-cultural impulse that was forever present) when he was designing a building (Figure C-16) Perhaps inspired by the vernacular houses of the Italian countryside with their exterior stairs, habitable roofs and covered trellises, which all helped blur the distinction between indoors and outdoors, Suarez also proposed a green roof for each of these townhouses, a concept not yet developed for this residential building type in New York.[8] Here again one can see the Italian influence in his design.

De Suarez & Hatton was commissioned to design a house for Ada Louise Kendrick in Douglaston, Queens, which survives to this day. This early architectural commission, his first in the United States, clearly shows Suárez's ability to rationalize spaces while maintaining a classical style with a limited budget. Located in an upscale neighborhood near the Hudson River at 231 Beverly Road (Figure C-17), the very compact house with a concrete block exterior might come across as too simple and even not belonging in the neighborhood, surrounded as it is by big mansions. It is located on a small plot and the house is simple, yet perfectly proportioned while the site is both narrow and deep. The street front facade is unpretentious, exposing its humble building material - concrete block. One enters a tiny vestibule, with a beautiful domed ceiling, leading into a large vaulted living room that anchors the few remaining rooms in the house. The living room opens onto the multi-functional driveway, allowing access through four 'French doors' for al fresco entertaining.

[8] New York Times, July 16,1922 "Another East Side Community Development to be Built by Syndicate at Cost of $500,000." The Article states that "*ten modern private dwellings with garden roofs fronting on a private street to be erected on plot now occupied by six old apartment houses located on East Seventy Fifth Street".*

Through the vestibule, crowned by the petite dome,[9] one enters the main living room with its vaulted ceiling. On one side, a fireplace is framed by French doors that open into a paved court that doubles as a driveway into the garage, which also serves to enclose the court on the far side. Opposite the fireplace is an arch leading into a small loggia. At the rear of the great vaulted room is a small opening with a painted cornice that leads to the two bedrooms, the kitchen and small stair to the attic. The size and inter-relationship of spaces was masterfully-handled given the small site. Suarez' classical vocabulary, the elegant use of exposed concrete block as building material to suggest stone and the impeccable proportions can all be appreciated in this house. The Italian cultural influence is evident in this house. Elements such as the dome, the vaulted ceiling, and the exposed concrete block mimicking stone all indicate that the Italian cultural influence prevailed over the Spanish aesthetic of his youth.

Another of the projects that Suarez executed while working with John Hatton was the renovation of The Swift, Seaman & Co. Building in New York.

> On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Swift, Seaman & Co. Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.[10]

Located at 122 Chambers Street / 52 Warren Street in New York City (Figure C-18) and originally built for Emily Jones in 1858 by her father, Isaac Jones, the third president of

[9] One persistent element of Suarez's architectural work was the inclusion of a dome and/or vaulted ceiling in most of his residential commissions. The only drawing that has been preserved of the original set of blueprints for the Douglaston home, is still in the hands of the current owner, Judge Maureen Healy. In 1970, some alterations were made to the house, though the original spaces remain intact. Most of Suarez's buildings, whether residential, hotel, or garden folly, incorporated a dome or a vaulted ceiling in one way or another. Domes remained a Suarez hallmark throughout his professional career.

[10] Landmarks Preservation Commission, May 16, 2000, Designation List 313 LP-2061.

Chemical Bank, this building was remodeled by De Suarez & Hatton in 1921-22 when its original cast iron storefronts were removed and replaced by new ones clad with stone. In the report prepared by Jay Schockley for the Landmark Commission, he states that the building is a "distinguished example of mid-nineteenth-century store-and-loft buildings that comprised the Tribeca area of lower Manhattan*".* The building extends through the block and the facades on both Chambers and Warren are inspired by the Italian Renaissance *palazzo*.[11] In the mid-nineteenth century, this area (now known as Triangle Below Canal or Tribeca), was developed for commercial purposes and in a short period of time, with the advent of the railroad and its terminus right on Chamber Street, it was transformed into a lively urban shopping street housing restaurants, shops, and hotels. This building housed the saddlery hardware business of Swift, Seaman & Company. A typical store-and-loft building, its facades on both streets the upper floors were clad in Dorchester stone rather than the more common brownstone. It is a good example of the use of this material in New York City at the time. The facades are embellished with ornately Rococo Revival style ornaments. Schokely goes on to write that,

> In 1921-22, the original cast-iron storefronts on both Chambers and Warren Streets were removed and replaced by new ones having steel columns and girders clad with stone ([Diego] De Suarez & [John M.] Hatton, architects). The Ground Story façade was changed and a stone-clad surround with a molded cornice with upper scalloped corners and multi-pane translucent glass including a roll-down security gate, fixed box awning and canopy; and a single anodized aluminum and glass door, with two stone paved steps leading upstairs*.*

[11] Ibid.

The building was converted to residential use in 1980 and still stands today as one of the few that can bear testimony of Suarez's architectural endeavors in the early 20th century.

The McLean Residence designed entirely by Suarez and Hatton was located at a prime location on 54th Street, between Park and Lexington Avenues, and stands out for its modernity and innovation regarding their design approach. Today it would have been considered as a total renovation as well as a project of historic preservation. Unfortunately, that same approach was not considered by the architect and/developer of the new condominium building which replaced the McLean Residence in Manhattan.

Not much information remains of this project except for the description printed by *The Professional Architectural Monthly* in September 1921.[12] This article about the McLean Residence has no author listed, but the paragraph describing the inspiration for the design strongly implies Suarez had some input on its text [13] as it reveals his socio-cultural Italian influence:

> The study of the forms, so seldom looked at or sufficiently appreciated, of the great period, which in architecture followed the Renaissance, has been a source of inspiration for the architects of the McLean's residence. Until recent years few have devoted much attention to this period and it is strange that it should have been so profoundly ignored and disregarded when, on the whole, the "Cinquecento" and "Seicento" offer us countless examples which could be wonderfully adapted to our modern needs and manners of living.

It goes on to state that:

[12]The Professional Architectural Monthly. *Volume XLIV.* September.1921.

[13] In the statement of fact that Suarez wrote in 1953 the original which rests in Vizcaya's Archives, Suarez wrote: "I finally wrote for him the first article ever published on Vizcaya which appeared in "Scribner's Architectural Magazine" (Suarez,1953) – Although his name does not appear in the article, it is possible that here too Suarez had input in the text.

> The masterpieces of Vasari, Ammanati, Buontalenti, Vignola, and others as late as Longhena and Bernini are, architecturally speaking, to the great public, only literary curiosities. It is to be regretted that the golden period of the Renaissance and even the late Gothic should have received so much attention from architects and students who apparently seldom realize the futility of a logical revival of their forms in our days; while buildings which offer unlimited material for adaptation remain entirely unknown. Tuscany, the Veneto, the Roman territory, offer endless buildings of all descriptions, country villas, town palaces, churches, gardens, and farmhouses, a veritable gold mine as yet almost untouched.

Furthermore, although information on Hatton is limited, one could venture to say that he was not as knowledgeable or creative as Suarez, particularly with regards to the classical. It is therefore easy to conclude that while this partnership lasted, Suarez's role was that of bringing in the clients through his social connections and creating the designs. Without intending to undervalue Hatton's qualifications as a designer, it is quite possible that his role was more technical, administrative, and hands-on: the partner-in-charge of the office and possibly of the construction administration of their projects. Design and public relations were Suarez's forte.

At the time this project was built, there seemed to have been a great deal of development going on in New York City. However, the article further highlights this project for its creative use of the space which allows for a city garden and further states that,

> *A glance at the plans does not apparently justify any reason why any or part of the two old brownstone houses, lying on the north side of east 54th Street, should have been kept as a foundation for the thoroughly modern residence, into which they have been transformed.*
>
> *Yet in this use lies the particular interest of this piece of work. It has been the tendency in recent years to devote great deal of architectural activity to the improvement of old New York real-estate property in the zones east of Park Avenue by transforming rather than rebuilding existing residences, and, in contrast with houses nearer Fifth Avenue, to take advantage of the open back yards to add to these modernized dwellings the hitherto practically unknown charm of a city garden.*

When one looks closely at the floor plans, the obvious comes to mind. Suarez's training as a classical architect is blatantly clear – the humanistic interest of bringing the outdoors in and the indoors out, the proportions of the individual rooms in relation to the overall massing of the building, the creation of high spaces within the house and last but not least, his signature trademark, a small dome in the vestibule which is described in the same article as follows:

> The small vaulted vestibule gives direct access from the street to the central hall, twenty-four feet high, with vaulted ceiling and overlooked by windows from the library and living-room. A short flight of steps leads directly into the dining room, all white stucco and "red Verona" marble trims and mantle-piece, and thence into the garden.

The miniature garden, designed by Suarez, could only be a formal garden. (Fig. C-15) Its clear geometry is reminiscent of the Italian gardens he knew so well and by now were second nature to him when it came down to designing them. They had to be, no matter what their size, gardens to enjoy from every angle, even from windows above as the anonymous author explains:

> Mrs. McLean's residence, although the word "alteration" hardly describes it, identifies itself closely with this programme. Covering as it does about half the area of the property, it leaves open for enjoyment a comparatively large space of ground in the rear, which, in the manner of a European city house, "hotel particulier" or "palazzina", is overlooked by the main rooms of the house.

The interior of the house was also decorated by De Suarez and Hatton. However, since there is no record of Hatton ever visiting Florence, comments such as the one below can only assume to have come from Suarez.

> …the ceiling of this room, twenty-two feet high, offers an example of Tuscan vaulting of the period, with the sharply defined edges of the penetrations and the artificial blue stone used throughout the house, contrasting sharply against the white stucco in the interior, is about the same shade of color as the one typically used in Florence.

This publication placed Suarez in the upper echelons of New York architects and further states,

> To obtain a few large rooms, as high as circumstances and proportions permitted, directness and simplicity of plan and a continuity of style in the treatment of decorative forms have been obviously the constant aim of the architects. In creating the impression of bare spaciousness and in seeking the value of a certain "emptiness," they intimately connected their work with the true expression given by the Italian architects of the best periods. Even when building on small scale, the masters of the past always seemed to have conveyed the sense of bigness and the dignity of large, void spaces. This characteristic impression, given by the palace or the church, was reflected in the smaller dwellings, and, except where, as in the gaily decorated rooms of the baroque period, a frankly playful effect was looked for, the whole of Italian architecture is noted for its broadness and simplicity of treatment, as well as the admirable logic in the use of decorative detail.
>
> An enclosed court, occupying the central portion of the house, comes down as low as the second floor and gives ample light into all inside rooms. The owner's bathroom walls and vault are very light pink, and the floor and lining of the sunken bathtub have been carried out in Tunis tiles.

It is worth noting that Tunis tiles were also used in the interior of the Kasbah in Vizcaya, another indication that Suarez was influenced not only by his Italian training and life in Italy, but his Colombian background grounded on Spanish-Moorish architecture.

It is not clear whether the existing building currently standing at 173 East Seventy Fifth Street in New York City is a renovation of the original project designed by De Suarez and Hatton in 1923 as 10 distinct town homes (Fig. C-16). Today, an exclusive private school stands on the same site of the project once planned by De Suarez and Hatton. An article which appeared in the New York Times describes it: [14]

[14] New York Times, July 16,1922 "Another East Side Community Development to be Built by Syndicate at Cost of $500,000." The Article states: "*ten modern private dwellings with garden roofs fronting on a private street to be erected on plot now occupied by six old apartment houses located on East Seventy Fifth Street".*

> *The plans, developed by De Suarez & Hatton Architects, differ somewhat from similar successful community developments, such as Sutton Place and Henderson Place, in that it will combine many of the conveniences of apartment life with separate private dwellings.*

This original new development was designed to include unique amenities such as a private roof garden and children's playground for each unit that offered owners additional convenience and sunlight and at the same time provided them with a secure and seamless combination of lifestyle between a single-family home and an apartment. Inspired by a successful development built in 1921 in West 94th Street, Pomander Walk, today a historic landmark, the short central street provided the project with an old world appearance, the exact phrase used by Suarez later in life…by placing all the services in the rear of the townhomes, the small private street remained quiet and friendly. The homes were proposed in orange stucco with blue stone trimmings, giving one the idea that here again, there was a strong Tuscan influence in the design that could only have come from Suarez's cultural background. Like the McLean Residence, one of the features of the town homes was a sixteen-foot ceiling giving a feeling of space, a typical design strategy of the Renaissance masters. Once again, Suarez carried across the strong classical Italian influence on his project in New York City.

The French Epoch (1922 – 1932)

The Hotel Granada was, without a doubt, the architectural jewel of the city of Bogota, at the time of its construction until its demolition. In architectural and urbanistic terms, it placed the capital at the level of its European counterparts. Located at the south end of the Santander Park (Figure C-19), it opened to the public in 1928, following

Suarez's design while he was living in Paris.[15] The hotel's restaurant became the main meeting place for the salons being held by the local intellectuals, until the April 9, 1948, civilian revolt burned large areas of the city and looted the hotel. In 1951, without any explanation, it was demolished and replaced by a modernist building housing the Central Bank.

This building is especially relevant because unlike the previous architectural projects designed by Suarez in New York, it was designed in the French Classical Style and not the Italian. This is important because it provides further confirmation of how designs are products of a designer's social and cultural influence.

In 1927 Suarez was commissioned to re-design the Plaza de Bolivar [16], the most important civic space in the country (Figure C-20) and equal perhaps to The Mall in Washington D.C. His design consisted of four classical fountains, one in each corner of the plaza.[17] No record exists as to why Suarez decided to incorporate water into his

[15]Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos, *Semblanza de Alberto Manrique Martin, Ingeniero y Arquitecto*., Ediciones PROA Ltda., Bogotá, Colombia, 1985.P. 31. While the totality of the design was done by Suarez in Paris, a local architect by the name of Alberto Manrique would become the architect of Record, eventually claiming the design for himself. Once again, Suarez had been denied the credit for his design. Only recently has his name resurfaced as the designer of this iconic building in his homeland.

[16] Latin American plazas or squares, emerged as a fundamental part of the political and military strategy by the Spanish colonists. In Colombia, after the independence from Spain, the *Plaza de la Constitution* would be transformed into the main public urban space of the city and the political and social history of Colombia would be written in this plaza. Diego Suarez would be called to re-design this plaza dedicated to his ancestor, General Simon Bolivar. During the second half of the 19th century, the plaza de Bolivar entered a new era when industrialization would have a big impact in Latin America, the expansion of capitalism spread. Social life took a turn towards more private spaces, imitating European cities. In 1881, the plaza would be re-designed changing its original name from *Plaza de la Constitution* to *Plaza de los Jardines,* a move in tune with the ongoing social changes. This new design, virtually a 'garden square' transformed this historic civic space into a restricted one, prepared for the emerging bourgeoisie. The Plaza loses its powerful civic aesthetic and function as the primary meeting place and becomes a smaller version of grand Baroque spaces in Paris and London incorporating in it, for the first time, the technological advances of the time, namely electric lighting and the tram. The new buildings on the Square, the Cathedral and the National Capitol, would represent the religious and political power and the plaza would take on a new role.

[17] The plaza was laid out with the Persian concept of Paradise.

design, but it is important to highlight that the original function of this plaza was to provide water to the population from a small water fountain in the center of the square.[18] However, in 1861, other popular activities such as bullfighting that took place in the central plaza were suspended and in 1880, the central fountain was replaced with a statue of Simon Bolivar. One year later, the plaza was converted into an enclosed garden square until forty-six years later when Suarez proposed the four corner fountains. Interestingly, Suarez was not credited with the design until years later and it would be his architect of record, Alfonso Manrique, who would again take credit for the design, much in the same way that Paul Chalfin had taken full credit for the gardens at Vizcaya.

Suarez's simple, yet elegant and perfectly-geometrical and symmetrical design was finished by mid-1929 and would remain until 1960 when an open competition for a new design would be awarded to the most modernist design by a young architect, Fernando Martinez. Perhaps the main reason for the new changes to the plaza was the fact that Suarez's design was done at a time when vehicular traffic was the innovation of the time and therefore the design was made for the car and not for the pedestrian. Suarez's solution for the sloped terrain of the plaza was to cut the square into the terrain and create a partially sunken plaza[19] that was almost totally occupied by the four fountains and by the statue of Bolivar that remained in the center. It is this statue that remains the benchmark for all the measurements in the country to date. This civic space

[18] Suarez grandparents owned and lived in the only residential building on this Plaza and Suarez was born just a block away. It is likely that he remembered the small water fountain of his childhood days.

[19] Here again we see Suarez's masterful solution to a topographical problem.

was also designed by Suarez while he was living in Paris and the French influence is evident. It was the only civic space (known to date) designed by Suarez.

In 1952, together with his wife Evelyn Marshall, Diego Suarez constructed what would become their Long Island residence[20] on a 17-acre plot at Brookville (Figure C-21). For this endeavor they sought the help of architect Frederick Rhinelander King of the firm Wyeth & King. In his book, *North Shore Long Island Country Houses 1890-1950,* Paul J. Mateyunas describes the Suarez Residence as follows,

> Set at the top of a long-wooded drive opening into a white gravel court lined with a wall of lush green, perfectly manicured yews, cut into the shrub wall opposite the house a niche shelters a life size statue of Hercules. The white-washed brick residence shows the influence of both French and Palladian styles. Standing regally on its roof are two statues taken from Mrs. Suarez's garden at Easton. The estate reflects her husband's experience as a landscape architect and is reminiscent of an 18th-century French garden pavilion built around a series of gardens evocative of Versailles.
>
> Three French doors overlook the rear terrace with views of a large reflecting pool and formal gardens. Eighty perfectly manicured lindens lined the formal walks of the parterre garden. Filled with a gallery of lead and stone statuary, the gardens surround three sides of the house. Statues of the four seasons, also from Easton, stand on the roof overlooking the garden. The pool house, a miniature version of the main house's front façade, sits at the south end of the swimming pool to the left of the enclosed porch.[21]

During a conversation with Raymond Lance Becker, the son of Suarez's superintendent at Brookville, Long Island, Becker recalled several key aspects of Suarez's garden, among them the fact that the land was divided in two halves, one

[20] It is interesting to note that Suarez's personal home in Brookville, Long Island was also designed in the French style and not Italian. See notes from James Maher interview with Diego Suarez in Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives, James Maher file.

[21] Mateyunas, Paul J. 2007. *North Shore Long Island Country Houses 1890-1950.* Acanthus Press.New York.

being the house and its immediate gardens and the other half what they referred to as ‘the field’ - a strip of grass which was consistently mowed so the Suarez’s could look at it from their living room.[22]

Mr. Becker recalled that the linden trees around the reflecting pond were boxed every fall for which a scaffolding was set-up because “*Mr. Suarez requested that they were perfectly trimmed”*. He also mentioned that there were a series of grass steps made with steel edging to contain the soil: “*They had an unusual shape and the grass was dyed so it would always look green*. *A steel swimming pool was emptied and painted white every year because the objective was to have it better reflect light”.* The house and surrounding garden remains in private hands.

Suarez's in-laws are likely to have asked him to produce a design for the family mausoleum at the Woodlawn cemetery in Queens, New York. Rather than designing an architectural monument, Suarez designed a garden. Diego Suarez is interred here, at the Marshall family plot. The memorial features a very simple design stripped of ornament since reduction and simplification of compositional elements had persistently characterized Suarez's work. Set on a circular corner plot it is defined by an evergreen hedge that serves as a backdrop for a stone cross placed at the center of the circle. A circle and a square. Geometric, classical, timeless and humble, all qualities that can be associated with Suarez. The smallest and simplest of all his known work, this project reveals Suarez's ability to design at all scales and the fact that his passion for landscape remained intact throughout his life. This is a site of quiet and uninterrupted

[22] Reference to the Italian countryside as well as the haciendas of the Savannah of Bogota.

contemplation. Lying next to his wife,[23] Suarez's tombstone reads: *Life passes but love endures forever* (Figure C-22).

During his marriage with Mrs. Marshal (which lasted thirty-five years until his death in 1974), Suarez focused his attention on writing and diplomacy and almost entirely abandoned his architectural career. He recalls those days as "*having found happiness in these hospitable and wonderful United States".*[24] Weekends would be spent in their Long Island estate at Brookville and in the summers, they rented a house in the Hamptons.[25] Every summer they travelled to Europe on the *Queen Elizabeth* and would spend time in Florence with his sisters. Suarez had a good relationship with his three step-children and even with his step-grandchildren who would occasionally visit them in New York. He became a member of the exclusive club, The Brook, where James Deering had also been a member. According to Marshall Field V (his step-grandson),[26] Suarez would spend every afternoon at his club cataloguing the portrait collection and the silver collection of the club.

The last years of his life he focused on fulfilling his dream of writing a book based on the personal letters of his ancestor, General Francisco de Paula Santander, who together with Simon Bolivar, fought for and obtained the independence of the

[23] Twenty-five years after his arrival from Italy to the United States, Suarez would marry Mrs. Evelyn Marshal, ex-wife of Marshall Field III, a prominent Chicago businessman. They were married in Monterrey, California on March 13, 1937. They settled in New York City, where they lived for the rest of their lives. New York Times, 1939.

[24] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

[25] Conversations between Ernesto Pardo and the researcher, September 2015. Pardo visited the Suarez Estate in Brookville frequently as a child.

[26] Conversation between the researcher and Marshall Field V, May 2012.

Viceroyalty of the New Granada from Spain, resulting in the creation of the Republic of Colombia. He would not live to see it published, but in 1976, two years after his death, his wife published his final book: *Twilight of an Empire*. Evelyn Marshall would pass away six years after Suarez and after her death their valuable belongings would be auctioned by Christies in New York. No personal papers have been found to date.[27]

Suarez is a far more interesting, complex and in the end, a more accessible figure than has been evident in the literature to date. The extensive research in archives and private family collections on three continents has unearthed a wealth of fascinating material that is collected here for the first time. This research clarifies how Suarez expressed the creative synergy generated by a rich, multi-cultural education, cross-class peer group and intercontinental travels toward the creation of his *magnum opus*: Villa Vizcaya.

For landscape historians, there is the question of the extent of Suarez's participation in the design of Vizcaya's garden for which he was denied credit for almost four decades. I have not attempted to produce "a smoking gun" regarding the question of Suarez's authorship and ability to design Vizcaya. Yet, there is nonetheless, a *corpus delicatus* [28] comprised of the documents, drawings and built works Suarez produced prior to Vizcaya. This study has brought to light the remarkable designs he did prior to

[27] Christie's Catalogue. June 7,1980. Fine English and Continental Furniture, Silver and Works of Art. The Property of the Estate of Mrs. Diego Suarez. New York.Christie's.

[28] *Corpus* delicatus *is Latin* meaning the entire works of an author.

Vizcaya, confirming that he was in fact a trained architect and that he continued designing buildings and gardens long after his involvement at Vizcaya. [29]

Perhaps the most important interpretation of Vizcaya's garden is the article that appeared in *Architectural Review* in 1917 and that Suarez claims he wrote, hence the description of the garden is worth mentioning.

> Among the themes of the formal garden are the asymmetry of left and right, the construction of thematic views, the negotiation of interrupted passages, the model of Tuscan private gardens, the iconography of Florentine Renaissance painting, the structure and water elements of oriental and Arabian gardens, and perhaps most importantly, the movement and orientation of the visitor's own body in relation to its physical organization. [30]

Suarez required the visitor to make a conscious choice between left and right when visiting the garden, signifying the asymmetry of value. On one side, it had the secret gardens and on the other, it did not. The three known structures designed by Suarez in the garden -- the Barge, the Casino, and the Kasbah -- all encouraged human occupation for different purposes. The barge was designed not only as a breakwater, but it was Suarez's vision of Isola Bella in Lake Cuomo that gave it its final program as a party boat. The Casino was designed as a place of repose and vantage point where the gardens could be appreciated, while the Kasbah was a private pavilion, a place to meditate.

Suarez' paper titled 'The Greek Temple' is filled with marginal sketches of Greek temple plans and details. In it he writes that: "The Parthenon is considered the most

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[29] With few exceptions, at the time Vizcaya was built, architects took on the job of the landscape architect.

[30] Vizcaya, The Villa and Grounds. *The Architectural Review*, Vol V, Number 7. 1917.July. Accessed 2013. http://www.archive.org/stream/architecturalrev05bostuoft#page/120/mode/2up

perfect model of buildings of this kind. It stands on top of the Acropolis of Athens and was entirely made of white marble". This paper is significant because it confirms the importance of the classical education Suarez received and how it permeated his designs.

Of equal importance is Suarez' finely developed sense of taste. For Suarez, taste was an essential element in everything he designed, in the way he lived, the way he dressed and in virtually every aspect of his life. He was, much like his fellow colleagues of the Second Renaissance Revival Group, a true *aesthete*, and a refined individual. This is just one of the many aspects of his personality that made him the figure he was. He is not the provincial and narrowly interpreted caricature that is the product of a distorted image that one man, Paul Chalfin, tried to paint of him.

The contribution made by Suarez to the development of landscape architecture in the United States is significant, but not easily measured. He achieved a well-respected professional reputation through a small but active architectural career, placing him among the more successful architects to practice architecture in New York during the early 20th century. This is evident in the publications about his work that have come to light during this research. Why, then, has Suarez been all but forgotten in the architectural and landscape architectural history in the United States? Suarez does not seem to have had an established firm and therefore did not give his office over to a successor, a practice common to most established firms. Without a successor to hold office records, drawings and papers, very little primary material has survived. Also, most of the buildings designed by Suarez have been demolished due to their prime locations in New York and in Bogota, leaving little to preserve his place in the city records. In

addition, others have taken credit for Suárez' designs and only until recently have these records been set straight. Some of these factors are further discussed in Appendix A.

In the end, it is simply that Suarez was not typical of the landscape architects working in the United States at that time. His formal introduction to the profession was obtained through his studies in architecture at the Florence Academy followed by an apprenticeship with Arthur Acton at Villa la Pietra. Until this research occurred, it was believed that Suarez did not practice landscape architecture after his design for Vizcaya. This research has shown that while Suarez' design career remained active particularly in architecture, he never abandoned his interest in landscape. I have not attempted to defend either Suarez or his work, but rather to offer a new perspective based on factual evidence uncovered during the course of this study. What I have presented is enough so that Suarez should at the very least be included in the history of landscape architecture in the United States.

Among the key problems historians and critics must confront when addressing Suarez' work are the remaining mysteries in both the man and the works he produced. Diego Suarez has never been formally studied until now. His life story is virtually unknown, and his works have never been considered together as a group. Further, he sits among landscape architects whose works are related -- Cecil Pinsent, Achilles Duchene and Jaques Greber -- who were active during the same time and whom history has largely forgotten, much like Suarez. Their work established a new Italian garden style in the United States and elsewhere. The nature of their work, particularly regarding the question of the Italian garden style, was important to Suarez. Suarez claimed that it was thanks to Duchene and Arthur Acton that he learned the principles of this garden

art. Pinsent was a colleague and a contemporary of Suarez in Florence and a member of the Second Renaissance Revival Group, and this study found that in some cases, literature has granted authorship of several gardens in Florence to Pinsent and not to Suarez. All of these designers' merit further study.

Among Suarez's projects and built works that still requires more research, as difficult as it may be to believe is Villa Vizcaya, even though it has been the subject of dozens of articles, two Master theses and two books. Landscapes evolve with time and Suarez' are no exception. Vizcaya's formal garden should be carefully re-examined to contemplate contemporary design techniques and technologies to keep its original spirit intact for the next century.

Suarez' relation to his homeland, which seems to have been a strong and motivating force in his writings, surely also played an important part in his designs. Focusing this dissertation on the socio-cultural influences in his design has required limiting the treatment of many of these topics while deleting others altogether. Perhaps when more of the yet-undiscovered Suarez work is revealed, scholarship can resume with this focus. Suarez' relation to his Colombian and Italian roots, both personally and professionally, will always remain key to understanding his work.

There will be ample opportunity, as the discussion above has demonstrated, for more narrowly-focused studies on the issues raised in this investigation, ranging from the rights of a designer to authorship for his/her work, to an in-depth exploration of the influence of Hispanic designers in the United States in the early twentieth-century, to a thorough review of the gardens that inspired Suarez for his design of Vizcaya. Of all the

results that might come out of this study however, of most value would be an increased interest in Diego Suarez as America's first Hispanic landscape architect.[31]

Many Americans are unaware that Spanish culture had firm roots in St. Augustine, Florida, and what is now New Mexico before the English arrived at Jamestown in 1607 or the Pilgrim's in Boston Bay in 1621.[32] Thus, Hispanic culture can be traced back to the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in California, Mexico, Florida and the Caribbean much like in the rest of continent. It helped shape and define early political development and helped to secure the birth of this new republic called America by providing supplies to the armies of George Washington in support of the American cause. Around twenty thousand reinforcements from Cuba, Mexico and Puerto Rico fought in the Civil War. Diego Suarez produced a full report of the history of the arrival of the Spanish in Florida at the request of James Deering.

DASP as an Analytical Framework in Landscape Architecture

Certainly, a garden or landscape can be understood on its own, as an example of form, as a study in sustainability, or a functional object. The history of landscape design

[31] It is appropriate here to distinguish the meaning of the word Hispanic. The term *Hispanic* was originally used to indicate a relationship to ancient Hispania, the Roman name for the Iberian Peninsula. In more modern times, it has taken a different meaning and it now refers to people of Spanish speaking, Latin American countries. It was created by the United States government to identify the specific group of people of Latin American descent living in the country during the 1970 census. *Hispanic* also refers to the influence of the Spanish culture and language on a group of people who suffered years of colonization. The term does not consider indigenous cultures, therefore prioritizing the dominant European cultures. The word *Latino*, short for *Latinoamericano* is used to denote people of Latin American origin. Today, the terms *Latino* and *Hispanic* are used interchangeably in the United States. Latino culture is situated in certain areas of the United States, in California and the Southwest, and cities such as New York and Miami, but more broadly in Latin America.

[32] Balkaran, Stephen. 2014.*How Hispanics are Defining and redefining America*. Retrieved from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-balkaran/hispanic-heritage-month-b_b_5848568.html

analysis is replete with such examinations. However, doing so imposes a boundary around the landscape that isolates it from the agents of its creation.

Landscapes are also frequently analyzed as exemplars of a designer – we recognize Olmsted or Burle Marx or Barragan in the details and features of a design, can trace the designer over time as surely as we can trace the life of a poet over decades of writing. But doing so dislocates a design from the particular contingencies of the environment, both physical and historical.

In fact, considering a landscape as an artifact – whether artwork or the working of an artist – obscures the process by which the design came into being. The designer alone is not responsible for building the garden; the client rarely has more than a dream and funds. The site contributes opportunities as well as constraints. All of these factors play together.

Design-as-a-social-process provides a multi-factorial approach to landscape analysis because it starts with the premise that any particular design emerges from a confluence of agents that includes the designer, the clients, the culture, the history and the site itself. Further, this approach mines the socio-cultural influences of each agent as a way to understand why or how a particular design decision was made. DASP seems to configure design as more dynamic, featuring the social processes as the major energy behind a design. The result of a DASP-oriented examination can be uncomfortable as it redistributes authorship; we are accustomed to granting sole responsibility for a design to an individual. Even when we recognize that a designer is influenced by personal history, a DASP approach requires that the designer be portrayed as part of the design “team”, not as the principal creator. Given the history of

landscape architecture, particularly the apprenticeship model of education, DASP implies that ***all*** of those who contributed be granted some level of authorship. Clearly, this is not the norm, as Chalfin demonstrates when he claims that Suarez was just another draughtsman working on drawing the plans, therefore, not meriting credit as a designer.

In Vizcaya, the client, James Deering, and the site itself both had profound impact on the final design. Deering wanted a European feel in a distinctly non-European habitat, but also wanted to preserve the natural character of the south Florida eco-system. The tension between these two desires impacted the final solution that became the garden. That is, it is not possible to know what Suarez would have designed without the direction Deering insisted upon: Villa Vizcaya came to exist because multiple agents fed the design.

Nonetheless, analyzing via DASP does not discount the impact of the principal landscape architect. In fact, one of the more interesting contributions of a DASP approach is it demystifies “genius” without diminishing the contribution of the designer. From the perspective of the landscape architect, DASP defines the creative process as the generation of ideas originating in the social and cultural influences embedded in the mind of the designer, which are then applied to design to solve problems observed by the designer. Thus, acts of genius have hypothetical vectors, and explanations for how a designer’s work becomes recognizable can be mined from that designer’s own experiences. Hence, the particular solutions derived by Suarez to deal with light, topography, and the functional aspects of Vizcaya are alluded to in his design

experiences in Florence, upbringing in Bogota, and education in Europe. This is information critical to establishing Suarez's design authorship of Vizcaya.

I would argue that these strengths can also be a weakness, though – DASP is essentially an ad-hoc analysis, something that is performed on a finished product or can only be deduced once some end stage has been reached. A truly "real time" framework for understanding design *as it is being performed* is not an outcome of this dissertation's research.

The Mound Revisited

Before ending, I must return to The Mound: the one feature that Suarez designed for the Vizcaya garden that can bring two opposing cultures together in a single design. According to Vincent Scully (1920-2017),

> There are two distinct ways of relating to nature - the pre-Columbian and the Greek - which are in fact primordial opposites. In the first, manmade monumental structures imitate the shape of nature; in the second, they contrast with them. Yet, it is more accurate historically to say that the first approach seems to have been worldwide and to have characterized the way most human beings thought of the earth-man relationship, while the second was almost literally invented by Greece and has dominated world architecture, especially that of Europe, almost ever since.[33]

Scully goes on to say that "We who inhabit the American continent are especially fortunate to have a living culture which espouses the old way still active among us" because the Mesoamerican monuments (Figure C-24) still exist as examples of when "imitation of nature was the principle behind its forms." [34] These two cultures, the Pre-Colombian and the Greek, were personified by the Mound, whether Suarez intended

[33] Scully, Vincent. 1996. Landscape as Cultural Object. In *Denatured Visions*. The Museum of Modern Art. New York. P. 7.

[34] Ibid.

this consciously or not. The sacred mountains built of stone by the pre-Columbian civilizations were man-made mountains, similar to the nature-inspired structures of Mesopotamia. In Crete, during the same period of the third and second millennia BC, the situation was more like the one that prevailed in the Savannah of Bogota; there is much less imitation of the natural form and emphasis is placed instead on the central courtyard, placed as to be axially directed towards the sacred mountain and to receive its force. At Knossos, the mountain lies on the axis of the main south propylon of the palace, much like the position of The Mound that Suarez chose to place on the south axis of the house.

By 1400 BC, the Greek temple was fully developed and cast off the age-old imitation of natural forms in favor of the evocation of the human presence in landscape. The Parthenon represents literally the victory of Western civilization over everything and was from the beginning the definitive embodiment of European pride.[35] Suarez understood this concept well as demonstrated in his writing on the subject and in the placing of the Casino on top of the Mound.

Rome was different: the major topographical feature with which she first dealt was the chain of mountains that forms Italy's spine. Whereas Greece is shaped by bowls of small plains encircled by mountains and its temples rise in the center of the spaces so formed, Roman sacred sites are on mountain slopes, looking out towards the coastal plains. Both conditions are also characteristic of the Colombian topography. At Vizcaya, thanks to Diego Suarez, all these concepts converge to form one of the best

[35] Ibid.

examples of a formal garden ever built in the United States and the only one in a sub-tropical climate in the world. I will end by quoting John Dixon Hunt when he states that:

> It is unwise to describe gardens or to explain garden history simply in stylistic terms: that way lie the banal alternatives of formal or informal, labels that continue to dog and clog garden analysis. No, we must ask for more searching questions, probe more deeply into cultural assumptions, asking about the uses of gardens, uses both physical and metaphysical, visible and invisible.[36]

Suarez brought a distinct classical design to the American landscape that evolved from his knowledge of classical art and architecture and his multi-cultural background. Because of his anonymity for almost half a century, scholars have failed to celebrate him as one of the major figures in American landscape history. Diego Suarez trained and practiced at a moment in time when gardening in a Renaissance style was revived in both the New and Old Worlds. By tracing Suarez' history, this study sheds a new and interesting light on a talented but enigmatic practitioner whose life and works were previously undiscovered. From his gardens in Florence to his resting place in New York, he wove together the worlds of art, architecture and landscape architecture to make a mark of his own, revealing how garden design, like its sister arts, can illuminate the fundamental characteristics of its designers' cultural background.

While my discussion of Suarez and his work has reached an end of sorts here, I prefer to see it as the beginning of a new awareness of his value to landscape architecture, as well as to all of us who have enjoyed his gardens.

[36] Hunt, John Dixon. The Garden as Cultural Object. In *Denatured Visions*. New York. The Museum of Modern Art. P.27

APPENDIX A
FINAL RECOGNITION

On May 15, 1953, an article appeared in the *New York Times* titled “Biscayne Bay’s New Showplace.” The showplace was Villa Vizcaya, James Deering’s estate in Miami, completed in 1922 (the house was completed earlier; Deering began spending his winters there in 1916). It would impact the life of the three main players in the design team of Vizcaya; Paul Chalfin, the artistic director of the project and Deering’s appointed representative; Francis Burrall Hoffman, the architect who designed the house; and Diego Suarez. “Hoffman did the plumbing, I did the house” was the statement attributed to Paul Chalfin and reported by one of the world’s leading newspapers. The statement spurred a series of events that would eventually reveal the truth about the authorship of Vizcaya. Hoffman threatened to sue the newspaper for libel and asked Diego Suarez to prepare a clarification of his role. Suarez’s statement of fact began by saying:

> I have read with considerable surprise an article by Mrs. Aline B. Loucheim which appeared in the N.Y. Times on March 15th, 1953. Although this article refers to events which occurred more than thirty-five years ago, I believe that in the name of fairness and truth, I should bring to the knowledge of the general public certain facts which have been incorrectly if not maliciously misstated by Mrs. Loucheim.[1]

In this seven-page typewritten document, the original of which rests at the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives, Suarez explains what really transpired and includes a long list of villas in Italy that inspired him while designing the gardens of Vizcaya. Thirty-seven years had passed, and Suarez had never claimed authorship of what would become, without doubt, his *magnum opus*. Suarez goes on to say,

[1] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

> Mr. Chalfin had verbally promised me to have included my name with his on the working drawings as an associate garden designer. I never pressed him on this point nor ever had a written agreement with him. Furthermore, perhaps due to my inexperience, I did not at that time realize the importance which this recognition would have meant in my later career as an architect and garden designer.[2]

Twenty years later, Suarez again recalled:

> Chalfin told me that my name would appear with his on the working drawings, but we had no formal agreement and, anyway, I was too young to think much about things like that.[3]

These were very different individuals, and each had his own design ideas, as opposed to collective ones. Chalfin, Hoffman and Suarez fed off each other's talents to supply missing bits and pieces that would bring the design to completion, resulting in the best outcome for the project. Chalfin had declared himself an architect, without having ever obtained training, academic or other. Chalfin had no credentials to back his claim so he connived to submit as his own work 'the barge', proof of his qualification, eventually gaining him his architectural accreditation.[4] Unaware of Chalfin's astute actions, and by the request of James Deering, Hoffman agreed to back him as his apprentice.

Katheryn Chapman Harwood noted that perhaps,

> There was the human element. Because Chalfin was so charismatic and persuasive a man, perhaps Hoffman, like Suarez, still found it hard to believe that all that beginning exhilaration of working as a team, with the many faceted, inventive Paul Chalfin – the rare fun of it – was rapidly to disappear forever. Upon officially becoming accredited as an architect, Chalfin proceeded to make clear that with the exception of the house in which Hoffman's name and his were linked, everything else – gardens,

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Classical America 1973, P. 68

[4] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc. P.62.

> barge, village, interior decorations, furnishings – for everything else he was to be credited as the designer.[5]

This proved to be Chalfin's biggest mistake. Years later, stirred by the publication of the *New York Times* article and Hoffman's plea for the truth to prevail, and after being confronted over Suarez's contributions, Chalfin argued that Suarez had been nothing more than a draftsman, and that in recognizing Suarez, he would need to recognize all the other draftsmen in his office. In a last attempt to prevent Suarez from receiving recognition for his garden design at Vizcaya, Chalfin replied to Deering's niece, Chauncey McCormick, regarding her inquiry about the authorship of the gardens, the barge and other site elements. Chalfin's response follows,

> When Suarez came to America he didn't know anything about drawing, but he had a memory stored with observation. We made a good draftsman out of him very quickly. I entrusted to him the detailing of the parterres and a good deal of work on the breakwater barge, but nothing original to himself. Unless you wish to mention other brilliant draftsmen, I do not see any particular reason for speaking of him.[6]

In a second letter Chalfin wrote,

> I wrote you before about Suarez, but I cannot imagine why his name should be stressed. My office trained him in draftsmanship and there were three men above him in the importance of their contribution. So to call him a collaborator is going pretty far.[7]

This was a far cry from the "talented young landscape architect" of Chalfin's letter to Deering.[8] The important thing to understand about Suarez was that he was much more than an architect. He was an artist and as such could take on any challenge

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Harwood, Kathryn Chapman. 1985. *The Lives of Vizcaya*. Miami: Banyan Books, Inc.P. 64.

[7] Ibid. P.65.

[8] Ibid.

without fear. Vizcaya's formal garden is living proof of this. Years later Suarez would say of Chalfin,

> During the years that I worked with him I never saw him make any but the most elementary sketches in order to express his ideas. To my knowledge he never sat at a draughting board to draw an architectural scheme or layout.[9]

Suarez's classical education at the Florence Academy brought him face to face with the great artists of the Renaissance, many of whom had founded the Academy and whose work he would study in detail. It was primarily the universality of these artists' skills that was transmitted to the students of the Academy. Suarez was studying architecture, but first and foremost he was an artist because at the root of these Renaissance masters lay one skill, and that was drawing. For Chalfin to accuse Suarez of not knowing anything about drawing was truly a fabrication.

Years later Chalfin, in a last attempt to discredit Suarez, would say to Henry Hope Reed in an interview that "Suarez was an alcoholic and his only interest were his family's papers." [10] Vizcaya had been Chalfin's life dream, his one obsession: on it he had built his entire future. One that never took off after Vizcaya.

However, letters from Chalfin to Deering, Hoffman's testimony and Suarez's own account as well as his personal life and professional achievements after Vizcaya, contradict Chalfin's statement. Ultimately, Suarez's contribution to Vizcaya's landscape was finally entered into the historical record.

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[9] Suarez, Diego. 1953. Statement of Fact. Miami: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives.

[10] Schnadelbach, Terry. Notes from his Interview with Henry Hope Reed. Given to the researcher by Mr. Schnadelbach. May 2013.See also James Maher notes. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Archives. James Maher Files.

In 1960 Mrs. Richard Sears Berry, a member of the staff of the recently formed Dade-County Museum, met with Suarez in New York and learned the extent of Suarez's involvement with the design of the gardens. This event prompted an invitation for Suarez to visit Vizcaya and honors and credits were restored back to him.[11]

Despite this important recognition on the role he played in Vizcaya, Suarez's name, with few exceptions, continued to be omitted from most of the literature in American Landscape history. The same seems to have happened within the literature referring to the gardens of the Anglo-American community in Florence. While Cecil Pinsent's name appears as the designer of many gardens, Suarez's was completely forgotten.

Why is so much information about Suarez missing from the existing literature? Several factors played a part in this misfortune. As noted previously, the biggest contributor to maintaining Suarez in the shadow for several decades was Paul Chalfin. Diego Suarez helped Chalfin build his credentials by providing him with the designs for Vizcaya and also for his personal professional accreditation. Mitchel Owens, editor of *Architectural Digest*, mentioned in a recent interview in NYC on May 8, 2017, that he had 'seen a couple of pictures of Chalfin's apartment and he was disappointed', he went on to say that Chalfin's talent was being a good editor of the work done by his artistic team. Had it not been because of the article in the New York Times and the intervention of Francis B. Hoffman, Suarez would be but a footnote in landscape history.

[11] Letter from Suarez to Mrs. Robert J. Bohne. April 5,1957 and letter from Suarez to Mrs. Richard S. Berry. February 6,1959. VMGA.

Another factor that influenced the lack of literature on Suarez is the fact that he was of Latin American descent. At the time of his arrival in the United States, the profession of Architecture and Landscape Architecture was dominated by men of Anglo-Saxon ethnicity.[12] However, despite not fitting the ethnic stereotype, Suarez belonged to a social elite stemming both from his Colombian roots as well as his Italian forebears. This was the 'key' to his entry into the Anglo-American community in Florence, who embraced his artistic talent, but perhaps never accepted him as one of their own.

At a young age, Suarez was exposed to transcontinental travel. His wealthy grandparents and parents, as most of the Latin American elite of the time, looked towards Europe for the education of their children. Suarez's father had been a diplomat in Florence where he met and married his Venezuelan-Italian mother. He grew up amongst a group of people who were well travelled and cultivated and therefore his exposure to the arts, to different languages and to a transcontinental lifestyle was embedded in him since childhood.

During the time he lived in Florence he moved within the local and foreign aristocracy, mostly Anglo-Americans and Russian expatriates who had settled in Florence. This experience allowed Suarez to design for and interact with people of different cultures and in different languages and continents. He moved freely and easily between Europe, the United States and Colombia, and in all three places left a trace of his work which has been re-discovered during this study.

[12] See Progressive Architecture Magazine, Nov. 1994, *A White Gentleman's Profession* by John Morris Dixson, p. 55-61, Penton Publications. Also, Suarez's own words in *The Pan-American Highway and Inter-American Relations*, 1952, New York: Colombian Diplomatic Mission United Nations and American Society of Landscape Architects Archives, Washington, D.C.

Suarez was the eldest of five siblings who never married or had children. Suarez himself married American socialite Evelyn Marshall late in life with whom he lived the remainder of his life. Mrs. Marshall had three children of her own from her previous marriage to Chicago business tycoon Marshal Field III. This lack of heirs on the Suarez family side played an important role in the inclusion of Suarez as an important player in the history of the profession. His step-children had no interest in his professional achievements and might not have even been aware of them.

In Italy, his sisters sold the family Villa and its content to an antiquities dealer. Except for some family portraits, one of which served to track down the Villa, most of the Suarez-Costa heirlooms were sold off by the current owner. Before selling the Villa, the Suarez sisters received a group of Vizcaya guides, led by Doris Littlefield, at the time curator of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, in 1977. This visit was recorded by Mrs. Littlefield in a letter dated November 8,1979 and helped establish that it was Suarez who designed the garden and renovated the Villa, before departing for the United States and Colombia in 1914.[13]

The advent of the technological revolution allowed the consolidation of all the material on Suarez scattered throughout three continents to reconstruct the life history of Diego Suarez. E-mail, Google Search and Google Earth, Facebook and E-bay have all contributed to the task of finding people, gardens and buildings, photos and books which just a decade ago would have made this task more difficult or simply impossible.

[13] Littlefield, Doris. 1976. Letter dated November 8,1979. Suarez File. VMGA.

I have been privileged to have had the support of a Suarez family member, Jose Asuncion Suarez-Niño, who provided me with crucial pieces of information that I was slowly able to piece together, and which led to other avenues of research. The family tree revealed the Russian connection between the Suarez family and members of the Russian aristocracy that went back several generations. This was important in connecting the dots that ultimately led to Suarez meeting Arthur Acton, his mentor and the man who introduced him to James Deering and Paul Chalfin.

All these factors, I believe contributed to preventing Suarez from becoming a prominent figure within the literature relating to his artistic achievements as a landscape architect and are the reason why Suarez's life and work have barely been highlighted by scholars and authors to date.

This study drew on a range of resources - personal correspondence, diaries, memoirs, fiction and non-fiction, interviews, genealogies, journalism, biographies, police records, photographs, and portraits along with other scholarly works, and many secondary works, many primary sources, both published and unpublished. Most of these documents were in public archives, or in private family collections. Of particular value were those belonging to the extended Suarez family and the Vizcaya Archives and other repositories in New York, Florence and Bogota. What mainly sets Vizcaya apart from other formal gardens in the United States is its scale and its location. Regardless of these unique characteristics, it did not exert any influence on the design of other American country houses.

According to Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin,

> Most of the estates built in the Northeast in the 1920's, such as John Russell Pope's Caumsett (1921-28) on Long Island, or Harrie T.

> Lindberg's Glencraig (1926) in Newport were in the decorous Georgian style. Southern California architects, such as George W. Smith, built sprawling haciendas in the Mission and Spanish Colonial Style. In Florida, Mizner concocted a picturesque Moorish-Spanish style for Palm Beach and Boca Raton, and New York architect Dwight James Baum designed Ca'd'Zan (1924-26) in Sarasota for John Ringling in a bumptious style that was modelled after a fourteenth century Venetian Gothic palazzo. Most American architects were not drawn to the Italian Baroque. An exception was Philip Trammell Schutze, who served his apprenticeship with Francis B. Hoffman and went on to design several handsome baroque houses, of which Swan House (1926-28) in Atlanta is the best example.'[14]

Shultze's work would mark the end of the American Country Place Era. Vizcaya's gardens would finally be complete in 1922, a year that marked the emergence of a new style in architecture: The International Style. Clean lines, stripped surfaces, glass and steel would replace heavy stone and ornamented facades. Perhaps the best explanation for Vizcaya's lack of influence on other American gardens was succinctly expressed by Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin: 'Vizcaya was too unusual in conception, too grand in execution, and too personal in taste.'[15]

At the time of its execution, any influence on contemporary landscape architects seems to have been minimal. A contemporary of Diego Suarez (1888-1974) an Italian-American landscape architect who had been working in America since 1904 was Feruccio Vitale (1895-1933). However, despite the many commissions to design Italian gardens during the Country Place Era, Vitale remained almost unknown until this century.[16] A second Landcape Architect who practiced the formal Italian style was

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[14] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.P. 235.

[15] Witold Rybczynski and Laurie Olin . 2007. *Vizcaya, An American Villa and its Makers.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

[16] Schnadelbach, Terry. 2001*. Feruccio Vitale.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press

Umberto Innocenti (1895-1933), who arrived in the United States in 1925, three years after Vizcaya's completion, and apprenticed with Vitale. Other landscape architects of the time, like Fletcher Steele (1885-1971) and Beatrix Jones Ferrand (1872-1959) produced some of the most outstanding landscapes of the period, but there is no evidence that either was influenced by Vizcaya in any way. In addition, there are no signs that Vizcaya influenced any landscape design outside the United States.[17]

[17] Ibid.

APPENDIX B
METHOD

What is biographical research? According to Zinn, it is “a wide field of different approaches and research strategies with blurred borders and overlapping areas”.[1] This study reconstructed the life of Diego Suárez in relation to the historical context of his designs, in the people he associated with and the histories that surrounded his life. It could be called a ‘design biography’ which can then be interpreted as research that narrates the life history of one individual as revealed through design choices of a single great work. Using a newly assembled collection of documents and images obtained through archival research and interviews, it demonstrated how Suarez’s transcontinental upbringing manifested itself in the design of one of America’s most celebrated formal gardens. It is through Vizcaya itself that Diego Suarez is best revealed.

Early in the research, it became apparent that the secondary data available on Suarez was scarce and, in some cases, unclear. It was necessary to discover and generate new findings through a variety of methods. Brewer and Hunter (1989)[2] suggest that qualitative research essentially employs a mixed-method approach. According to Gray and Malins (2004) ‘researchers in the field of art & design are characteristically eclectic, diverse and creative in the methodologies they have adopted. When necessary, they have drawn on experimental methodologies, constructivist

[1] Zinn, J.O.,2004. Introduction to Biographical Research. Social Contexts and Responses to Risk Network (SCARR). Working Paper 2004/4. University of Kent: Canterbury, Kent, UK, Available: Retrieved from: https://www.kent.ac.uk/scarr/papers/Introduction%20biographical%20research.%20WP%204.04doc.pdf

[2] Brewer, J. and Hunter, A.,1989. *Multimethod Research: A Synthesis of Styles,* Chapter 3: Formulating Research Problems, Newbury Park, CA, Sage. P. 74.

interpretation and reflection, and invented hybrid methodologies, involving a synthesis of many diverse research methods and techniques.'[3]

Denzin says external validity requires that the case used for generalization is representative of the population and that restrictions of time and place are considered. More specifically, Trochim explains that external validity may also be explained in proximal terms: "we begin by thinking about different generalizability contexts and developing a theory about which contexts are more like our study and which are less so… This also holds for times and places. When we place different contexts in terms of their relative similarities, we can call this theoretical a *gradient of similarity*.[4] To create a basis for assessing similarity, the inclusion of design as a common code that could perform the identification of concepts from one domain (Colombia) to (Italy) to those of another domain (USA) allowed the identification of similarities across domains to gain a better understanding of the design of the garden at Villa Vizcaya. Denzin adds that *"for continuity to be achieved, researchers must note the surrounding 'historical conditions' in relation to the subject when the life story was given".*[5]

Historic research would not be possible without archives. The Vizcaya Archives contain a wealth of historic information providing deeds, photos, plans, surveys, blueprints, and much more. The Vizcaya Archives was the first resource consulted for this study. They are a permanent collection of material pertaining to the history of

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[3] Gray, C. and Malins,J., 1993. Research Procedures/methodology for artists & designers In *Principles and Definitions: Five Papers by the European Postgraduate Art & design Group*. Winchester School of Art.

[4] Ibid

[5] Denzin, N.K., 1970. *The Research Act in Sociology*. London. Butterworth. P.241.

Vizcaya from approximately 1914 to the present. Many hours were spent combing records on Suarez and data relating to the property.

In addition to the information sourced in Vizcaya Archives, research in other repositories in Bogota, Miami, New York and Florence was carried out. The repositories were visited and/or contacted via e-mail by the researcher. The following is a list of repositories (in alphabetical order) visited and/or contacted during this research project where much of the primary materials were sourced. The bulk of the material sourced from these repositories will be given to the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens upon completion of this study.

Academia de Genealogía, Bogotá, Colombia

Academia de Historia, Bogotá, Colombia

Accademia Delle Belli Arti, Florence, Italy

Archivo Nacional, Bogotá, Colombia

Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá, Colombia

Canadian Center for Architecture, Quebec, Canada

La Pietra, New York University, Florence, Italy

Library and Archives Canada, Genealogy Services
Reference Service Division, Ottawa, Canada

Miami Museum, Miami, Florida

Museo de Bogotá, Bogotá, Colombia

Olin & Uris Library Research and Learning Services, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Otto G. Richter Library, University of Miami, Archive and Special Collections, Miami, Florida

Robarts Library – Specialist Internet Archive, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

The American Institute of Architects, Archives and Records, Washington D.C.

The British Institute of Florence, Florence, Italy

The Cultural Landscape Foundation, Washington D.C., www.tclf.org

The New York Public Library, New York, New York
Tribune Photo Archives, tribunephotos.com
Vizcaya Museum & Gardens, Miami, Florida
City of New York Municipal Archives, archives@records.nyc.gov
Information Services of Latin America, ISLA isla@imi.net

As previously stated, qualitative methods were used to chronicle the events that shaped the life and work of Diego Suarez. Interviews with individual persons who knew Suárez, either directly or indirectly were an essential part of the research project. The Life History Approach (LHA) was selected as the most practical strategy for developing and answering research questions presented in this dissertation. Dollard (1989) defines the life history approach (LHA) as a deliberate attempt to define the growth of a person in a cultural milieu and to make theoretical sense of it. The LHA approach provides the flexibility necessary to validate information in the data collection process. Following Dollard's criteria for the life history, a commentary may not only include an interpretation of the subjective aspects of the development of the individual's life but also the links with family and the wider cultural context.[6]

For this study, several primary resources who knew Suarez were available and their stories were recorded by taking notes of their knowledge of the property or Suarez family history. Specifically, the technique of content analysis was used to analyze narrative data from open-ended over the telephone interviews and personal accounts of people who knew him or were related to him. [7]The strength of this technique is its ability

[6] Dollard, J.,1935. *Criteria for the Life History*. New Haven, CT. Yale University Press.

[7] Frankfort-Nachmias,1999, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences.* New York. Worth Publishing.

to emphasize the value of a person's individual account and provides pieces of the puzzle that will eventually tell a complete story.[8]

Most of the data collected in the form of interviews were conducted with family members of Suarez, friends of the family, and scholars. Although the interviews were led by specific questions regarding Diego Suarez, there was a certain amount of freedom permitted in the responses so that the person being interviewed could expand on the ideas they felt were most significant. Respondents who knew Suarez were asked to explain in their own words their impression of Suarez in whatever capacity they knew him, friend, relative, employee, etc. These interviews provided a small glimpse of Suarez's life but did not provide any information regarding his design philosophy. The broad nature of the questions allowed the respondents considerable freedom to express their thoughts, feelings and perceptions.

In terms of research protocol, each interviewee was contacted by email to explain the research objective prior to requesting an appointment and scheduling the interview. In all instances, it was the first time that the interviewees spoke about Suarez and their relationship to him or their interest in him the main reason being that no one had previously contacted them to enquire about Suarez.

More than twenty personal interviews took place during the research phase of this study. The selection criteria for the individuals interviewed include time spent with the subject and/or with someone who had previously interviewed the subject and/or who had some connection to Suarez in any way. Questions were tailored to each respondent

[8] Marshall, Catherine and Rossman, Gretchen.1989. *Designing Qualitative Research.* Newbury Park, CA.Sage Publications.

according to their relationship with the subject. This approach ensured that basic issues were covered, but it permitted new data that was specific to each interviewee to emerge. The participant's perspective on the social phenomenon of interest, in this case, Diego Suarez, unfolds as the participant views it, and not as the researcher views it (Marshall and Rossman,1989). The purpose of the interviews was:

1. 1. To acquire an initial portrait of Diego Suarez as seen by different people that in one way or another knew him or knew someone that knew him.
2. 2. To uncover information that could lead the researcher to look for archival material that would complement the information collected from the interviews.
3. 3. To cross-check information from the interviews with information obtained from archival material and thereby verify its content.

The raw data collected from these interviews will be sent to the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens to complement their existing archival material on Diego Suarez.

Because the objective of this study is to chronicle the events that influenced Diego Suarez's life and his design for Vizcaya, it was necessary to identify people who had known him, worked for him or done research on him. Considering that Suarez died in 1976 at age 88, it was clear that only a younger generation of relatives, friends, staff or scholars could be contacted for this task and that they would probably have been very young when and if they had actual contact with Suarez, bringing to the forefront of the interview the reality of lost memory. The process of identifying and contacting these potential participants for interviewing involved several elements.

Initially, living relatives in the United States were identified, mainly from his wife's family, the Marshal Field's in Chicago. An internet search provided the researcher with

the contact information for the Marshal Field V foundation.[9]Mr. Marshall Field V, Suarez's step-grandson responded positively to the request for a telephone interview. This interview was recorded and is part of the archival material that will be sent to Vizcaya's archives. The interview provided key information about an era in Suarez's life that was later used to help build the final portrait of the subject.

The next interview was scheduled with an architect and author, Terrence Schnadelbach, who wrote a book about Feruccio Vitale, a landscape architect and contemporary of Suarez in the United States. Mr. Schnadelbach is one of the few authors in the existing literature that mentions Suarez in one of his books. He agreed to do a person-to-person interview in New York City. This interviewee was more knowledgeable about Suarez's professional career. In this case, the interview was not recorded, but the researcher took notes. The Interviewee later sent his own personal notes on Diego Suarez via e-mail. He also provided crucial information regarding Suarez's early professional life in Florence. The notes taken during this interview will be stored at the Vizcaya archives upon completion of this study.

The third interview also took place in New York City and was a direct result of the information gathered from the interview with Marshall Field V. A visit to The Brook, Suarez's club located at 111 east 54th Street in Manhattan, and a person-to-person interview with its manager, Greg Godon, as well as a waiter at the club who knew Suarez, again revealed a previously unknown aspect of Suarez's life; mainly the fact that Suarez spent the last years of his life cataloguing the silver and art collections of this club, as well as writing the manuscript for his last book, *Twilight of an Empire*. As

[9] http://fieldfoundation.org

with the previous interview, it was not tape-recorded, but notes were taken and a copy of the two books written by Suarez for the Club were obtained. They form part of the archival material that will be given to the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens upon completion of this research project.

The fourth interview was conducted in Queens, N.Y. with Judge Maureen Hailey, current owner of the house designed by Suarez and Hatton for Ana Louise Kendrick in 1923. The interview was organized by a local architect, Kevin Wolfe, who wrote an article on this house titled 'House Proud'.[10] The interview as well as the visit to the house provided new information regarding Suarez's professional life in New York after his involvement in Vizcaya. Here again the owner of the house provided an original blueprint which clearly identifies Suarez as the architect of the house.

Suarez worked on other landscape projects in Florence before travelling to the United States; these were important to analyze and compare to Vizcaya. After the projects were identified, phone numbers of the potential interviewees were obtained. At this point, a phone call was made to the respondent to determine their interest in participating in the interview process. Finally, if the potential respondent was interested in participating, an interview was conducted using telecommunication (phone, Skype) or face-to-face.

Interviews (in person and via Skype)

2012.05.18 Ian Simpkins, Chief Horticulturalist
Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
Miami, Florida
In-Person Interview

[10] The article appeared in the New York Times on May 5, 1994, on Page C00010 of the national edition with the headline: House Proud.

2012.06.06 Michael Henry Adams, Blogger
Professor of History, Columbia University, New York
Telephone Interview

2012.06.18 Marshal Field V, Step-grandson
of Diego Suárez, Chicago, Illinois
Telephone Interview .

2012.08.03 Fernando Gomez-Rivas,M.D.
Genealogist, Miami, Florida
In-person Interview.

2012.08.06 Raymond Schnadelbach, Author
Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Florida
In-person interview in NYC
Address: Starbucks in 39th Street

2012.08.06 Greg Godon, General Manager
The Brook Club, New York
In-person interview in NYC
Address: 111 East 54th Street

2012.08.06 Maureen Healy, Judge
Owner of House designed by Suárez, Douglaston, Queens
In-person Interview in Douglaston, Queens
Address: 213 Beverly Road, Douglaston, Queens.

2012.08.06 Kevin Wolfe, Architect
Douglaston, Queens
In-person Interview in Douglaston, Queens
Address: 213 Beverly Road, Douglaston, Queens.

2012.09.12 Luis Álvaro Gallo, Historian
Academia de Genealogía, Bogotá
Telephone Interview.

2012.11.22 Jose Asuncion Suárez, Historian
Cousin of Diego Suárez
Academia de Historia, Bogotá
Telephone and In-person Interviews.

2012.12.12 Andrés Ospina, Journalist
Bogota, www.blogotazo.com
Skype interview.

2013.06.13 Brad Hietikko, Blogger
Contact by e-mail.

2013.08.16 Alfonso Manrique, Architect
Bogotá, Colombia
Telephone Interview.

2013.09.09 Flaminia Gennari, Vizcaya Curator
Rome, Italy
Telephone Interview.

2014.05.06 Gianni Ponta, Owner of Villa Selva & Guasto
Florence, Italy
In-person Interview.

2014.05.07 Ellyn Toscano, Director of NYU Campus at Villa La Pietra
Florence, Italy
In-person interview.

2014.11.07 Lynn Summers, Ex-President of “The Vizcayans”
Miami, Florida
In-person interview

2015.02.07 Laurie Olin and Witold Rybczynski, Authors of “Vizcaya: An American Villa and it’s Makers”
Miami, Florida
In-person interview

2016.09.15 Lance Becker, Son of the Superintendant of the Suarez Estate in Long Island.
Telephone Interview .

2016.05.23 Ernesto Pardo, Son of Suarez’s cousin who frequented the Suarez Estate with his parents.
Telephone interview

2017. 05.08 Mitchell Owens
Architectural Digest
Decorative Arts Editor

2017.05.20 Judy Ganet
M 347.559.2975
Owner of Suarez Estate
Brookville, L.I.

Qualitative methods were used as the primary method of data analysis and representation, because they best assessed the design contributions that Diego Suarez made to the profession of landscape architecture. The techniques used provided sufficient checks and balances in relating the design approach and built works of Suarez to capture the essence of his design influences in landscape architecture as well as in architecture. Qualitative research does not contain the same data analysis techniques as quantitative research. Instead of working with preconceived models, hypotheses, or theories, the qualitative researcher develops concepts, insights and understandings from patterns in the data.[11]

Telephone or face-to-face interviews were chosen as one instrument for data collection primarily because they were the most efficient way to solicit input from a group of respondents. Interviewees were chosen based upon their personal and professional experience pertaining to Diego Suarez. Each respondent was very cooperative; however, scheduling time and place to conduct interviews was sometimes difficult. Qualitative interviewing calls for a flexible research design.

According to Robert Burgess (1984), field research mainly involves observation, documentable evidence, and casual interviews. Entering a site with any preconceived ideas can impede the discovery process and may lead to misconceptions.[12] Suarez's gardens in Florence were approached with limited knowledge of the existing field evidence. Field work involved searching for the physical location of each property based on the information found through the research at the Vizcaya archives and specific

[11] Taylor, S. J., and Bogdan, R., 1984, *Introduction to qualitative research methods: The search for meaning*, New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

[12] Burgess, Robert.1988. *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research*. London. Routledge.

family member interviews. Once the gardens were identified, contact through e-mail and regular mail was established with each villa owner to determine their interest in participating in the process and asking for permission to view, photograph, measure, and take notes regarding the physical remnants of the gardens designed by Suarez in the early 1900's. Finally, when the owners responded with interest, a field trip was planned to Florence to visit each of the four gardens which were identified. Wherever possible, interviews were conducted to obtain further information during the visit to each garden.

Field observation consisted of doing a site analysis of each property, visually assessing landscape architectural style, measuring structures and gardens and their elements where appropriate, observing signs of patterns and designs, and sampling plants that are representative of the area. Plants were an important consideration. There was an abundance of *Pinus Pinea and Cupressus sempervirens,* as well as other trees and shrubs in the Florentine Gardens. Dating trees to verify their existence during the study period was essentially based on size and comparisons to old pictures or any other data that could corroborate the existence at an earlier time. Remnants of orchards and groves were identified in all the visited gardens in Florence.

History of Colombia at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century was a pertinent part of this research and revealed that the Suarez family, specifically his paternal grandfather and namesake, was independently wealthy and ranked amongst the six richest men in the nation.[13]The lineage of the Suarez family

[13] Santos, Enrique. 1992. *El Corazon del Poeta.* Bogota: Nuevo Mundo Editores.

was also a key factor in tracking Suarez's life and work, and this task was accomplished with the help of the Colombian Society of Genealogy.

A Suarez family tree was commissioned from the Colombian Society of Genealogy. This new document confirmed that Suarez was related to several historic figures linked to the Colombian independence from Spanish rule and was the key to understanding the Suarez family connections with the Russian aristocracy making the connection that it was through them that Suarez was introduced to Arthur Acton and other members of the Anglo-American community in Florence.

The data available on the World Wide Web was limited. Government records, libraries with articles and books, images, historic information, archives, and numerous other resources were accessed but provided little information regarding Diego Suarez. Credibility and reliability were based on the sites being from professional institutions, such as government, education, or private historical societies. All web-based data was corroborated following archival research or interviews.

Interviews and oral histories are not necessarily accurate recollections. Given the time lapse, the stories might be simply repeated without the interviewee fully understanding them. Essentially, there are three-plus generations that have occupied many of these sites and lived this history. So, what can be gleaned from the interviews can be counted on as fact, with some substantiate evidence. However, it is a source that can shed light on the research and possibly help to bring it, and those who lived it, alive**.**

Entry was never denied to the properties and current owners were helpful in providing as much information as was available to them. Because of the nature of the

sites and the importance to the study, photographs were taken during the site visits and later they were re-visited with the aid of drone photography and by using these pictures and aerial photos by way of Google Earth.

One of the critical delimitations seen in this research is the researcher's ability to do the work. Edman C. Penning-Roswell, in his article "Themes, Speculations and an Agenda for Landscape Research," talks about perceiving the landscape and the impact one's past might have on determining how the landscape is viewed. Does the researcher have the background, education, and ability to conduct and view the landscape objectively; or, can it even be viewed objectively from a research standpoint? Keeping an open mind is essential to as much objectivity as possible.[14] Landscapes can seldom be restored; whereas buildings are more easily reconstructed to their former state. The landscape is affected by many things, such as heritage, politics, nationality, climate and money. History is a selective discipline subject to differing interpretations. In this case, the researcher is both a trained architect and landscape architect, so the work was analyzed both visually and theoretically.

One of the uncertainties was that the sites visited were over a century old and most had had features modified by cultural influence, new ownership, new uses and/or natural forces. Also, documentation usually does not focus on landscapes but rather structures, people, and possessions.[15]

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[14]Penning-Rowsell, Edmund C.1986. “Themes, Speculations and an Agenda for landscape Research” in *Landscape Meanings and Values,* edited by E.C. Penning-Rowell and D. Lowenthal, pp.115-128. London. Allen and Unwin.

[15] Sorvig, Kim and Thompson, William J. 2005. *Sustainable Landscape Construction*. Chicago. Island Press.

APPENDIX C:
ADDITIONAL FIGURES

Figure C-1. *Flagler Street*. 1900's. McCrory and Seminole Hotels. Miami, FL. Reprinted with permission of Google, https://google.com (November 6,2018)

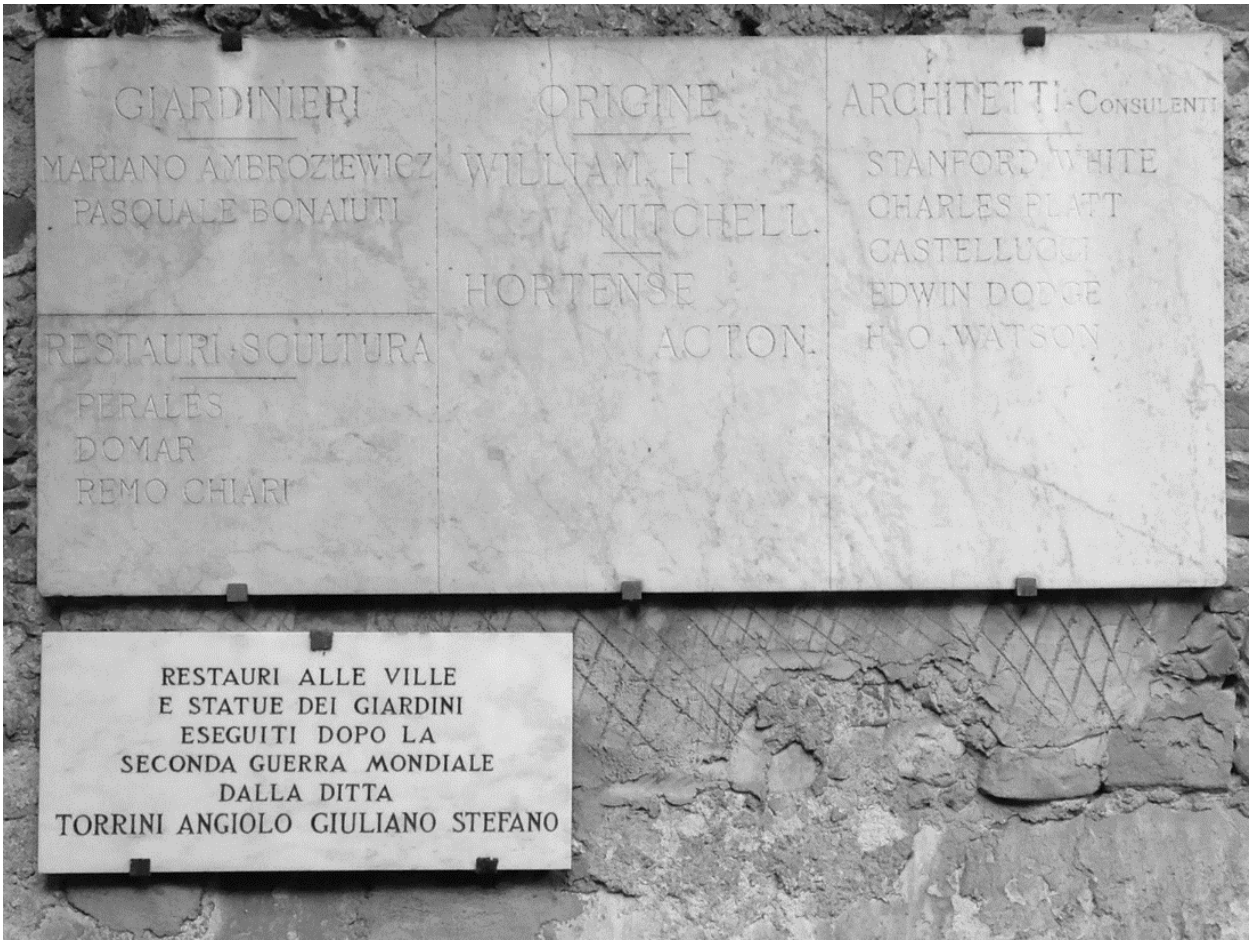


Figure C-2. Enrique Gaviria. *Marble Plaque*.2014. Florence, Italy. Photograph by Enrique Gaviria, courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

Figure C-3. Victor Valobonsi. *Villa Selva & Guasto*. 2017. Florence, Italy. Photograph by Victor Valobonsi, courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

Figure C-4. *Villa Selva & Guasto*. Florence, Italy. A) Façade.1960. Courtesy of Gianni Ponta. B) Swirling pines.1960. Courtesy of Gianni Ponta. C) Façade. 2014. Courtesy of Enrique Gaviria D) Swirling pines.2014. Courtesy of Enrique Gaviria.

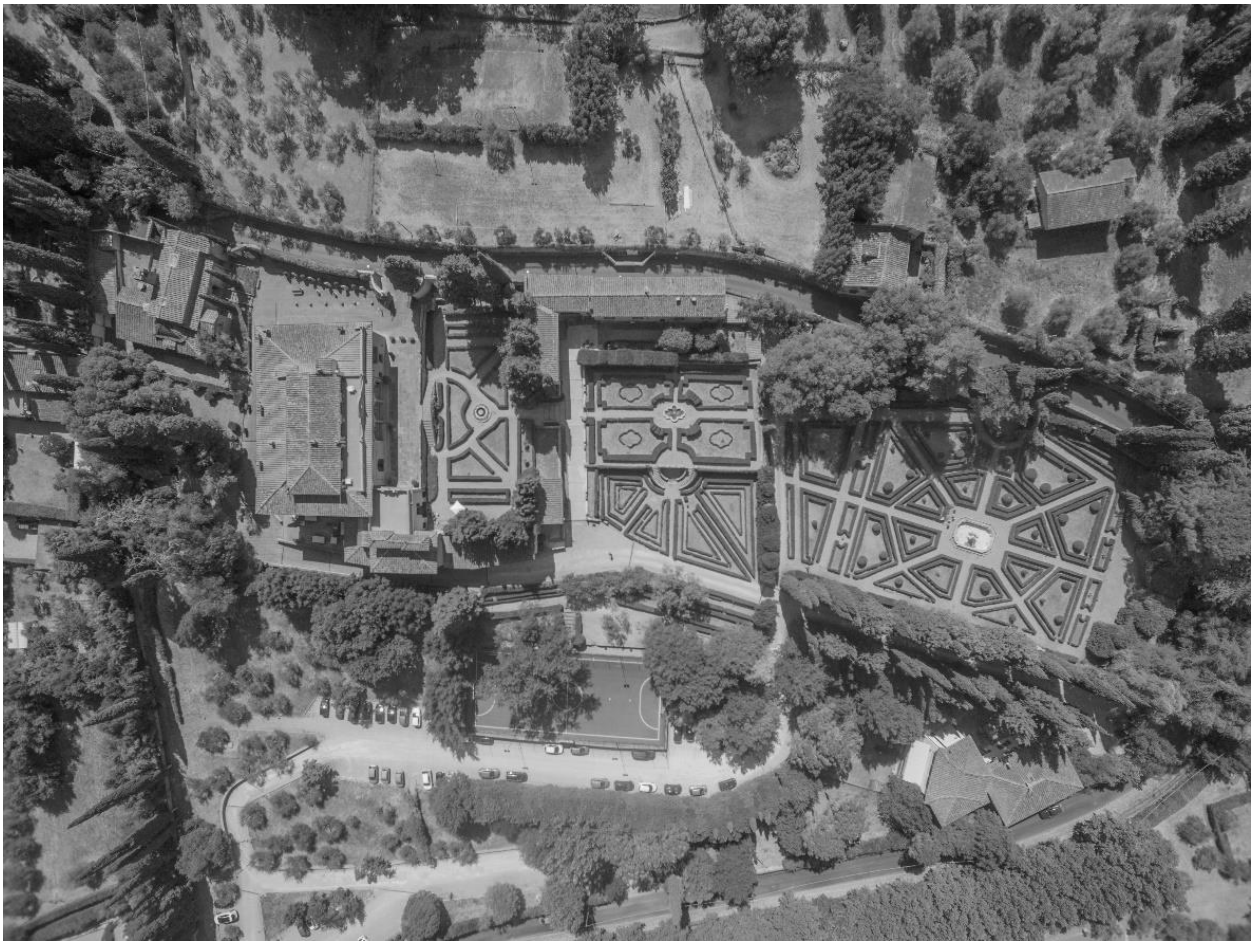


Figure C-5. Victor Valobonsi.*Villa Schifanoia*. 2017.Florence, Italy. Photograph by Victor Valobonsi, courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

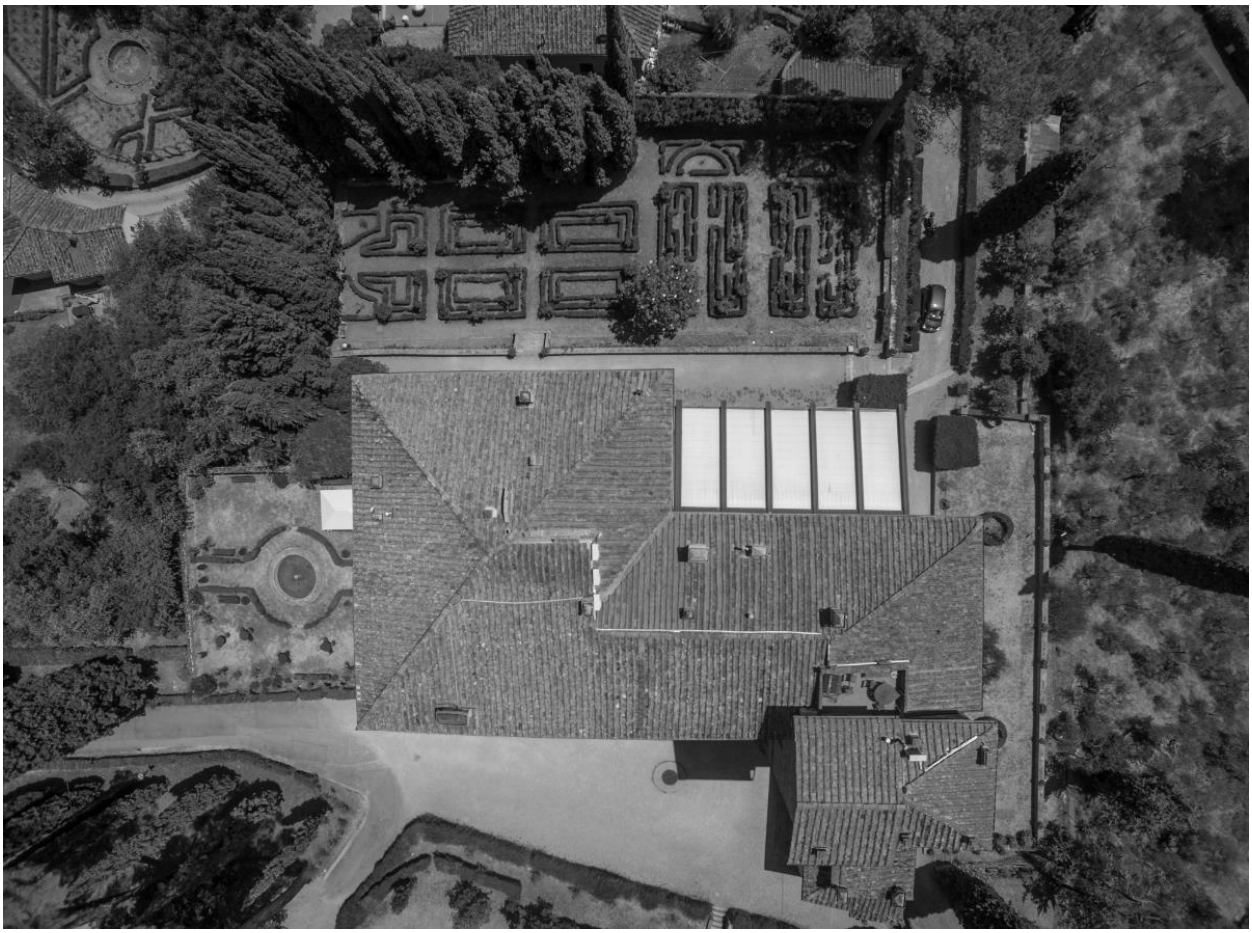


Figure C-6. Victor Valobonsi. *Villa Torri Gaitai*. 2017. Florence, Italy. Photograph by Victor Valobonsi, courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

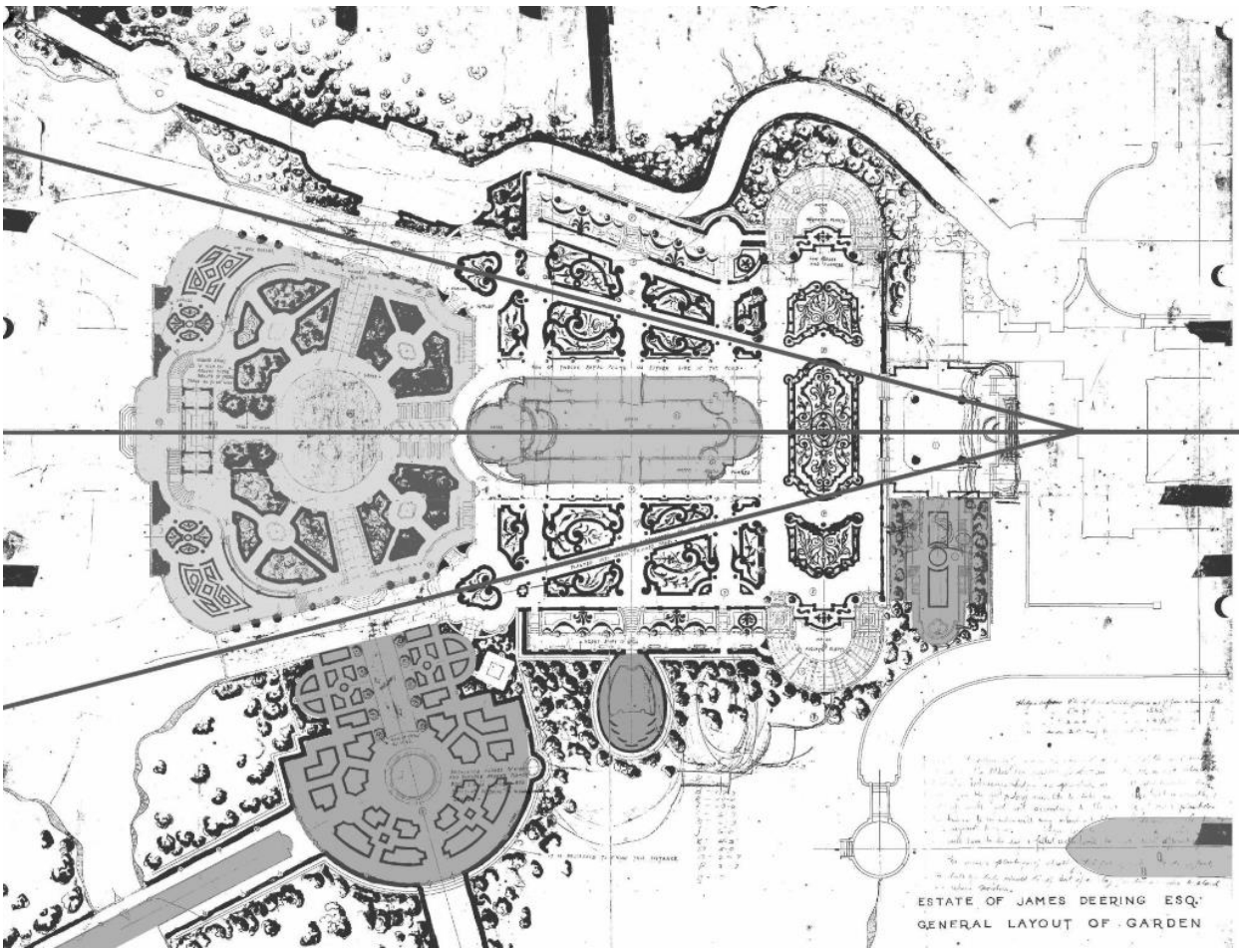


Figure C-7. Mattie Edwards Hewitt. *Villa Vizcaya*.1914. Master Plan of the Gardens by Diego Suarez. Reproduced with permission from Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Miami, FL: © by Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

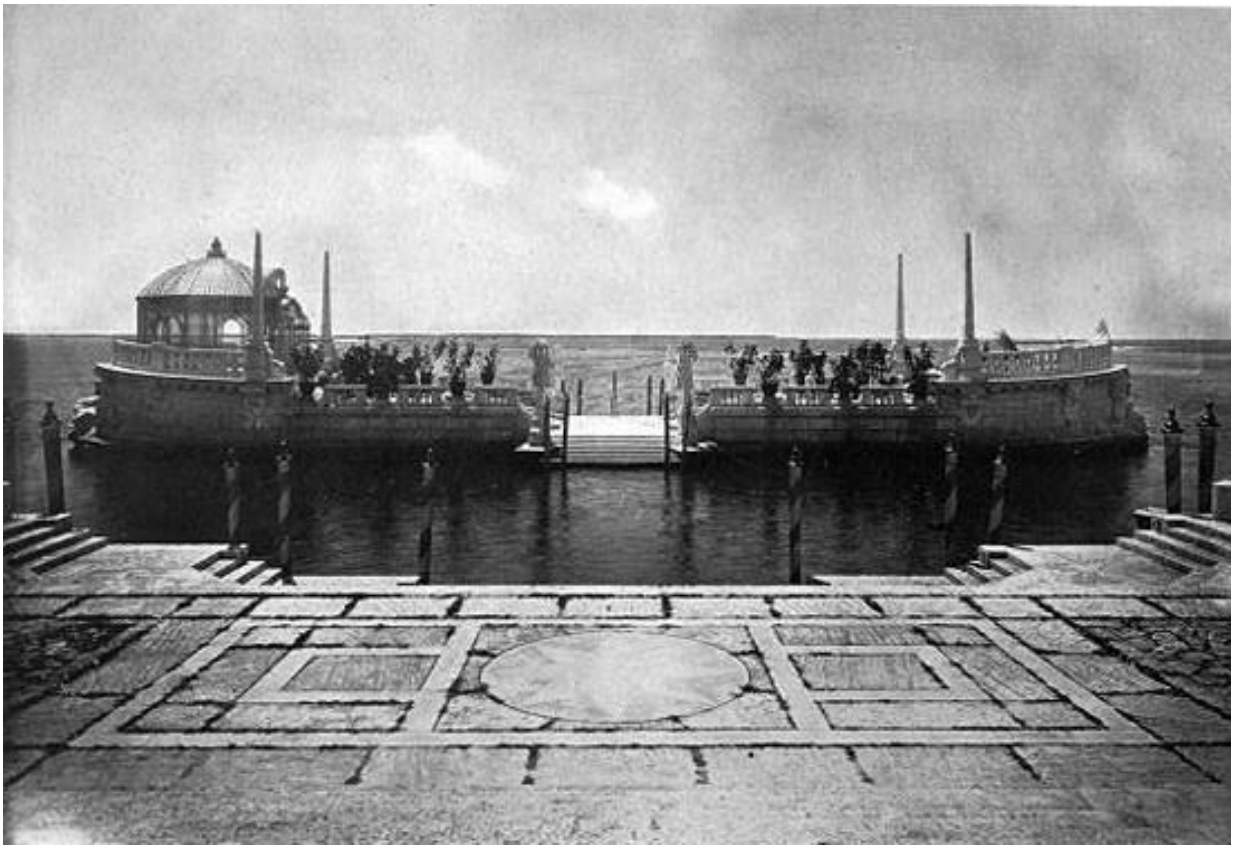


Figure C-8. Mattie Edwards Hewitt. *Villa Vizcaya*.1916. View from east terrace towards the Barge. Reprinted with permission from Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Miami, FL: © by Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

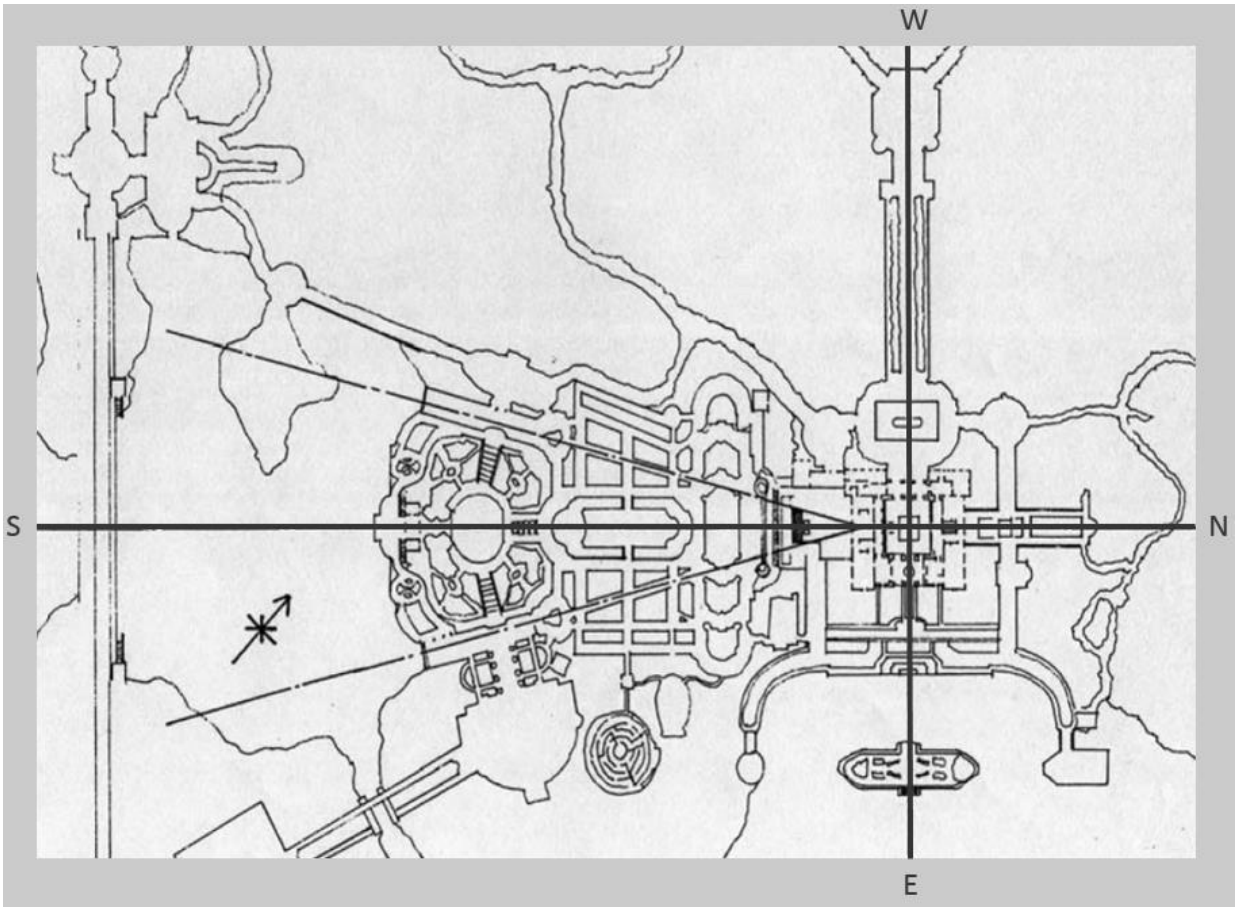


Figure C-9. *Villa Vizcaya*. East/West axis and North/South axis. Reproduced with permission from Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Miami, FL: © by Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

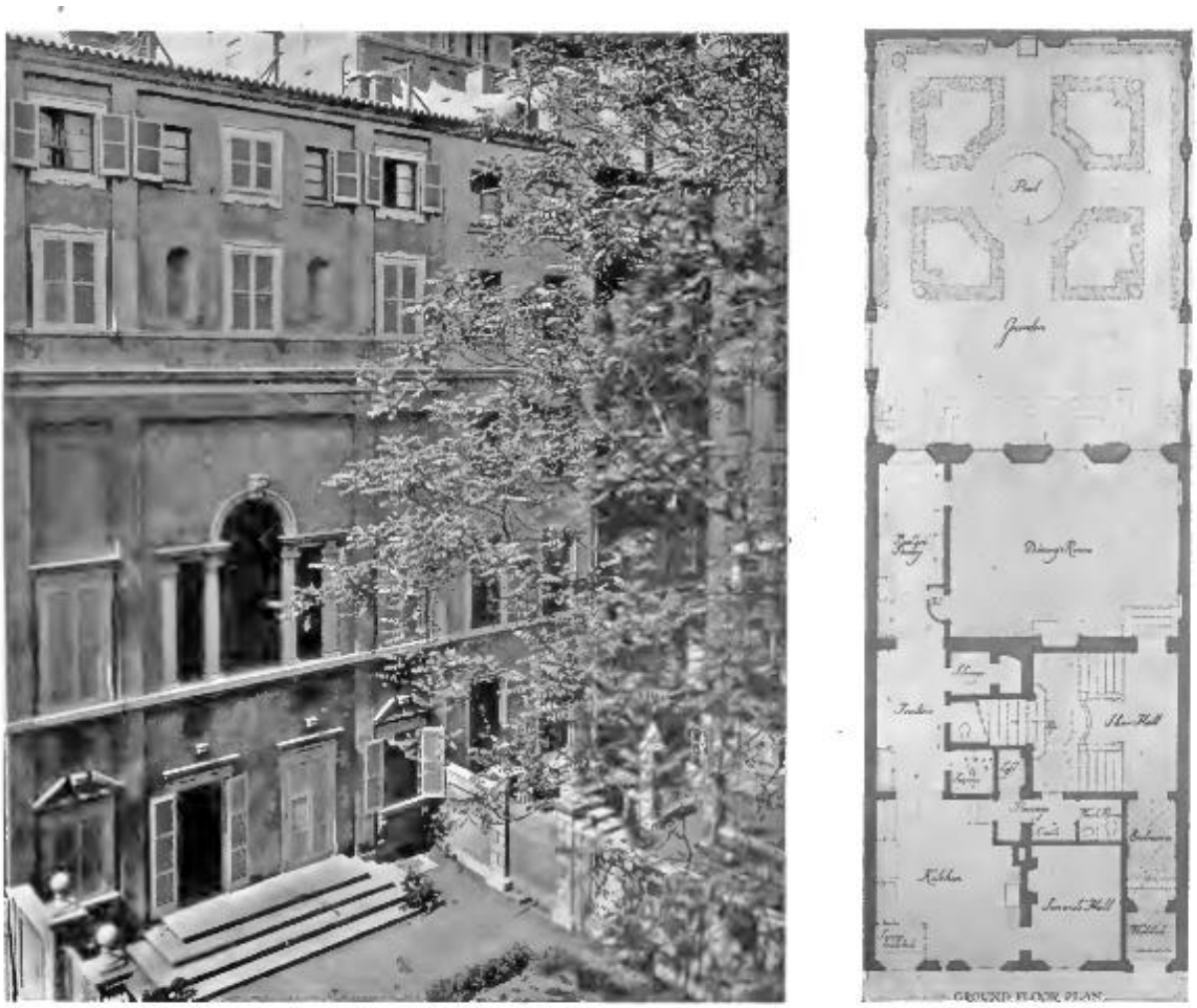
Figure C-10. *Isolla Bella*. 2018. Lake Cuomo, Italy. Reprinted with permission from W Magazine Online,https://www.wmagazine.com/story/borromeo (October 14, 2018)

Figure C-11. Mattie Edwards Hewitt. *Kasbah at Villa Vizcaya.*1916. Miami, Florida.Reprinted with permission from Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Miami, FL. © by Vizcaya Museum and Gardens.

Figure C-12. *Quiosco de la Luz*.1915. Bogotá, Colombia, Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Bogotá, Parque de la Independencia 1910-1922, Tomo 824, Folio 87. Source: GERLEIN Juan, “Relación de los árboles, arbustos y principales plantas ornamentales que el infrascrito ha sembrado en dicho parque, desde que se hizo cargo de él”, informe del 13.12.1915, en: Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Bogotá, Parque de la Independencia 1910-1922, Tomo 824, Folio 87.

Figure C-13. Enrique Gaviria. *Secret Garden at Villa Vizcaya*. 2015. Miami, FL. Photograph by Enrique Gaviria courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

Figure C-14. Enrique Gaviria. *Teatrino at Villa Vizcaya*. 2014. Photograph by Enrique Gaviria, courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

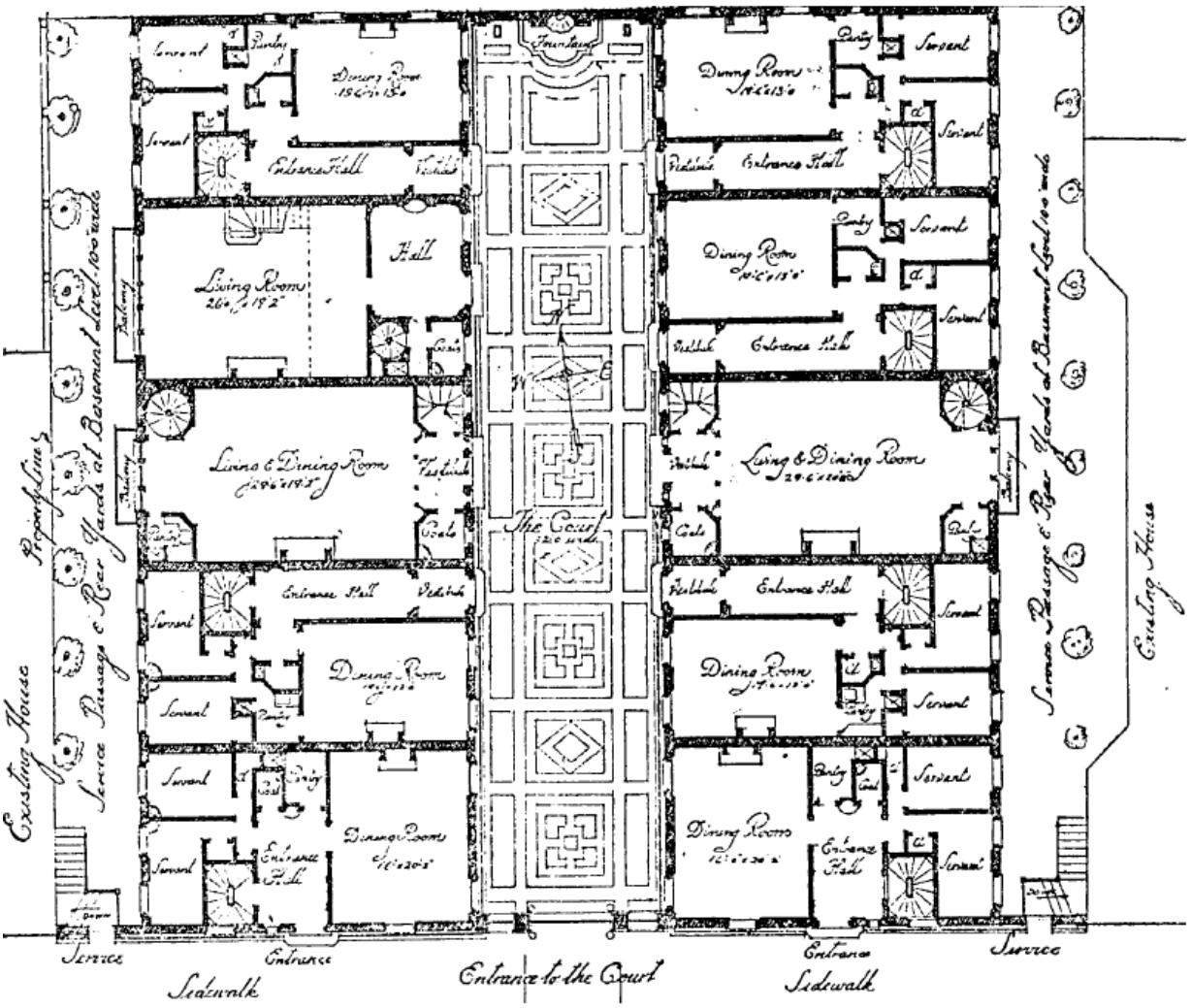


REAR OF HOUSE AND GARDEN.

De Suarez & Hatton, Architects.

RESIDENCE, MRS. ALICE McLEAN, 125 EAST 54TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

Figure C-15. *McLean Residence*. 1921. 125 E 54th St. Design by De Suarez & Hatton. New York. Reprinted with permission of The Professional Architectural Monthly, http://www.archive.org (May 15, 2014)



Ground Plan Showing Development of Plot With Ten Dwellings.

Figure C-16. *Proposed Development*. 1922.163 E 75th St. Design by De Suarez & Hatton. New York. Source: New York Times. Published July 16,1922. © New York Times.

Figure C-17. *Kendrick Residence*. 1994. 231 Beverly Rd. Douglaston. Queens, New York. Design by De Suarez & Hatton. Courtesy of Maureen Healy.

Figure C-2. Enrique Gaviria. *Swift Seaman Building*, Warren Street. 2017. New York City. Photograph by Enrique Gaviria courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

Figure C-3. *Hotel Granada*. Bogotá, Colombia. Diego Suarez, Design Architect. Reprinted with permission of Google, https://www.google.com (July 16, 2014).

Figure C-20. *Plaza de Bolívar*. Bogotá, Colombia. Reprinted with permission of City of Bogota, http://www.bogota.gov.co (April 22,2015).

Figure C-21. *Suarez Estate*.1953. 68 Wheatley Road. Brookville, Long Island. Courtesy of the City of Brookville.

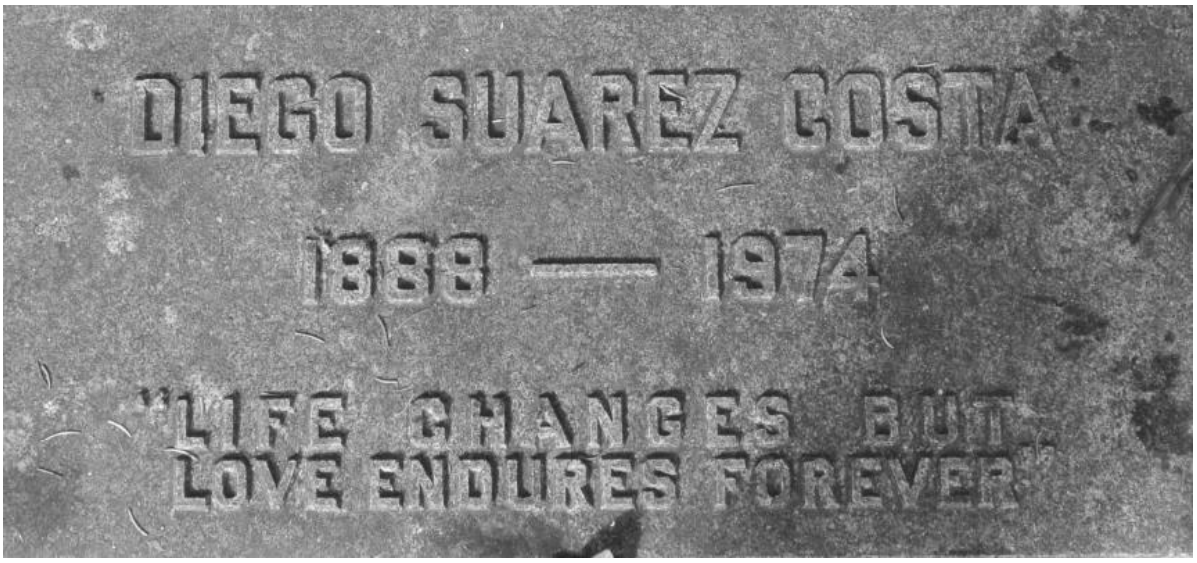


Figure C-22. Enrique Gaviria.*Tombstone of Diego Suarez*. 2015. The Woodlawn Cemetery, Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY. Photograph by Enrique Gaviria courtesy of Margarita Blanco Collection.

Figure C-23. *Savannah of Bogota*. Bogotá, Colombia. Reprinted with permission from Google, https://www.google.com (August 12, 2018).

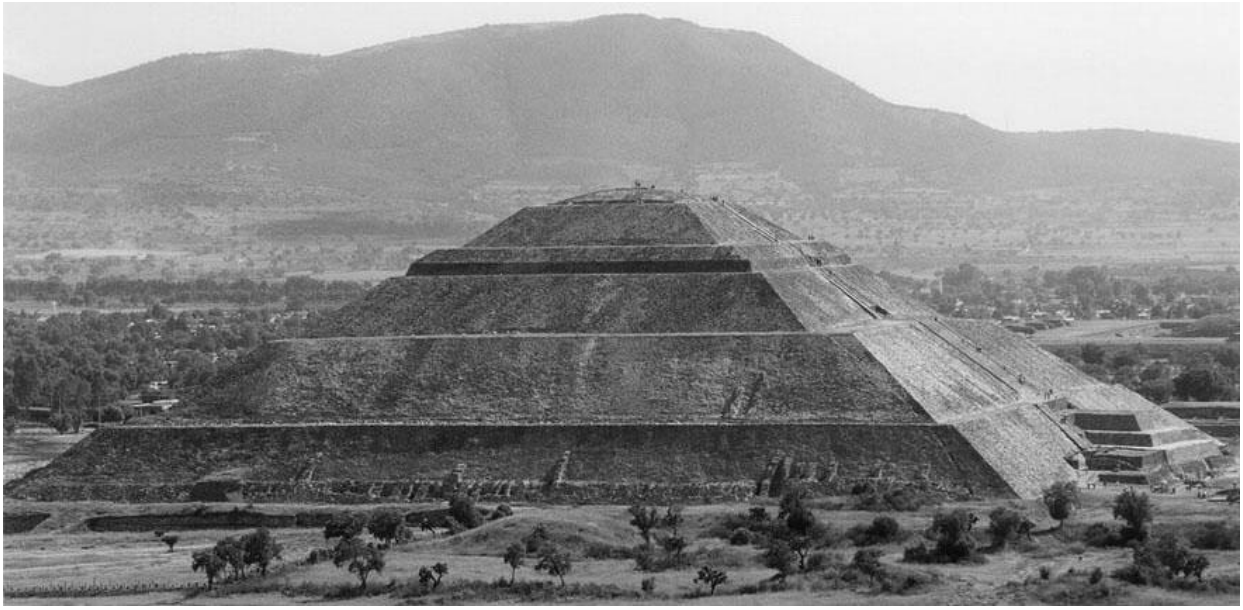


Figure C-24. *Pyramid of the Sun*. Teotihuacan, México City, México. Reprinted with permission from Google, https://www.google.com (September 18, 2018).

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Margarita Blanco was born in Colombia, the homeland of Diego Suarez. She earned a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Cornell University, and she practiced architecture for more than twenty-five years, serving as the founder and partner at both the *Taller de Arquitectura de Las Americas – Ricardo Boffil*, an international architectural studio in Bogotá, Colombia and *Grupo Parasol*, an international group of companies dedicated to finding design solutions for technologically advanced affordable housing worldwide. After obtaining a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from Florida International University in 2005, Ms. Blanco helped establish *ArquitectonicaGEO* as co-founder and director, and has focused her career on landscape architecture for the past thirteen years. She oversees nearly all the firm's projects, ensuring cohesive design solutions that address functionality, aesthetics, and environmental richness. Under her leadership, the firm has garnered numerous awards and significant media attention. Ms. Blanco enrolled in the Ph.D. program in landscape architecture at the University of Florida while continuing to work full time. The focus of her study was bringing to light the previously unrecognized contributions of Diego Suarez to the fields of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

In addition, she is writing her first book, *Designing Paradise: Diego Suarez, America's First Hispanic Landscape Architect*, a biography on Vizcaya Museum & Gardens landscape architect.