Cultural History of Europe, Issue: Garden and melancholy in Europe

Université de Caen Normandie
Deadline: Dec 15, 2017
www.unicaen.fr/mrsh/hce/

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Call for papers:

Electronic journal: Cultural History of Europe
"Garden and melancholy in Europe between the XVIIIth century and the contemporary era"

The research group ERLIS (EA 4254, University of Caen) is preparing a collective work on the theme "Garden and melancholy in Europe between the eighteenth century and the contemporary era". The publication will take the form of a special issue of the electronic journal Cultural History of Europe (http://www.unicaen.fr/mrsh/hce/), scheduled for autumn 2018.

Garden of heaven or garden of tortures, hortus conclusus or locus amoenus, utopia or idyll, mirror of society or antithesis, place of memory or place of oblivion, living place cultivated by humans, as work in progress without end or as relic, forgotten and abandoned, but alive nevertheless - the microcosm of the garden is not just the dream space par excellence, but often also a space of melancholy. In its many facets, the garden always reflects its creator. As such, the garden as research subject highlights essential aspects of the history of consciences.

Whether a work set in reality, or a representation in a creative piece, text, image, music, - the garden exerts a universal fascination, for landscape architects as well as literary figures, poets, filmmakers, graphic artists, painters, philosophers and musicians. This fascination has recently undergone a renewal that goes hand in hand with an increasingly acute awareness of the climate crisis and gives new verve to both garden practices and theoretical reflection. We are witnessing a real craze, a sign of fundamental changes in society. The garden has now become a space of resistance against excessive liberalism and even, more generally, the loss of humanity.

Who says resistance, says melancholy. The garden, as "heterotopia" seems in essence the place "where melancholy sleeps" (Apollinaire). One can consider it in its therapeutic aim: to walk, to contemplate it soothes and releases the soul, and to take care of it means to exercise a fundamental and "universal" human and social activity. Since the Enlightenment, the garden has become an element of social and sanitary policy. Medicine and psychiatry use it for therapeutic purposes. Or it can be given a place in a work of art. Here too, its role is intimately linked to melancholy: it can act as a drug, as a remedy, it can be the place of reflection, of distance from reality, it can highlight the link between beauty or death, or simply seduce by the response that its eloquent silence

offers to the violence of the human world. It is always the space in which one lives at once freely its melancholy and one in which one can free oneself from it, even cure it, in which pathological melancholy can be transformed into "soft melancholy", the one wherein melancholy becomes creative. The garden can even arouse the desire for metamorphosis, the desire to become a plant, for the plant becomes perceptible as the image, even the model of the force that does not aspire to power. Herein lie some thoughts around the garden and melancholy.

The special issue seeks to illuminate from various angles the link between the garden and melancholy. The goal is to gather articles from the various European linguistic fields in the following disciplines: literature, sociology, psychology, history of art and architecture, history of medicine, geography, philosophy, media sciences, visual arts and music.

Information for authors

The deadline for submissions is April 30, 2018.
Submissions for the special issue may relate to any European cultural areas, but must be written in French, German, English, Italian or Spanish.
The electronic magazine Cultural History of Europe publishes only original articles, which are evaluated through double-blind peer review. Members of both the scientific committee and the journal's review committee will be invited to serve as reviewers. To insure anonymity during the review process, the articles themselves should not contain information that reveals the identity of the author. A cover page should be attached indicating the name, title and home institution of the author. Proposals must include a summary in French of approximately 200 words. Articles must be between 30,000 and 60,000 characters, including spaces and notes.
The evaluation committee's decision will be rendered within two months of the deadline.

The proposals for contributions (consisting of a title and abstract of about 15 lines), accompanied by a short CV, should be sent by 15 December 2017 to:
- Hildegard Haberl: hildegard.haberl@unicaen.fr,
- Annette Lensing: annette.lensing@unicaen.fr
- Corona Schmiele: corona.schmiele@gmail.com

Reference:
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