

Symbolism in 18th Century Gardens (Schwetzingen, 28-29 Sep 06)

Stichting OVN

SYMBOLISM IN 18TH CENTURY GARDENS

The Influence of Intellectual and Esoteric Currents, such as Freemasonry

28-29 September 2006

Schloss Schwetzingen, Germany

During the 18th century, freemasonry provided a social network for men of different walks of life, including many aristocrats, intellectuals, artists and architects. Membership of a masonic order was socially accepted at the time and it was even fashionable to make one's membership subtly known to others, for instance through the use of domestic objects with symbolic decorations. Also the decoration of houses could be used in this respect.

In the same time period, garden design and landscape art incorporated classical, mythological and religious symbolism, and gardens became an expression of the status, personality and learning of their owners. It was not uncommon for a garden design to include 'hidden' symbolism, for the path through a garden to reflect a journey of initiation, or for architectural follies to be built in the shape of masonic temples. This symbolism was purposefully 'hidden', meant to be discovered by the initiated or to enlighten the visitor with new insights. Today, we are no longer familiar with common 18th century iconography and unable to read the visual clues to the meaning of such gardens.

Art historical approaches and heritage preservation policies are traditionally based on Christian iconography, and have largely overlooked the importance of masonic and esoteric symbolism to art, architecture and garden design. Recent academic studies, however, have shown the importance of masonic heritage to our cultural collective heritage and brought the hidden symbolism in historical gardens to the centre of attention.

This conference aims to provide an introduction into the masonic and esoteric symbolism in 18th century garden architecture, provide an overview of recent academic research into the subject, and raise awareness of the importance of preserving the remaining sites as a part of our cultural heritage.

The conference takes place at the summer residence of 'Kurfürst' Carl Theodor in Schwetzingen, the location of one of the eldest, most intricate and best preserved masonic gardens in the world.

Conference program

Thursday 28/9/2006

8:30 Registration, Coffee

9:30 Siegfried Kendel (Vermögen und Bau Baden-Württemberg, Amt Mannheim): Welcome

SESSION I: GENERAL INTRODUCTIONS (I) (Snoek)

9:45 Prof. Dr. James Stevens Curl (Professor Emeritus Queen's University, Belfast & De Montfort University, Leicester):
Symbolism in Gardens: An Introduction

10:30 Discussion

10:45 Pause

SESSION II: GENERAL INTRODUCTIONS (II) (Scholl)

11:15 Caroline Holmes (Tutor of Garden History, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge):
A Rose by Any Other Name? - An Introduction to the Symbolism of Plants and Planting

11:45 Dr. Cristina Ruggero (Bibliotheca Hertziana, Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Roma):
Denkmäler für internationale Freunde. Juvarras "Capricci" und ihre Symbolik

12:15 Discussion

12:30 Lunch

SESSION III: MASONIC GARDENS THROUGHOUT EUROPE (I) (Scholl)

14:00 Prof. Dr. Patrizia Granziera (University of Cuernavaca, Mexico):
Politics and Freemasonic Symbolism in 18th Century Venetian Architecture and Garden Design

14:30 Discussion

14:45 Pause

SESSION IV: SCHWETZINGEN (Curl)

15:15 Dr. Monika Scholl (Kunsthistorikerin, Offenburg):

Minerva und Arion: "Schnäppchen" für Schwetzingen?

16:00 Prof. Dr. Jan Snoek (Universität Heidelberg):

Die "Fabriques" im englischen Gartenteil, ein wahlloses Durcheinander?

16:45 Discussion

17:00-19:00 First guided tour through the Schwetzingen Garden (3 x 20 participants)

20:00 Dinner of speakers and organizers

Friday 29/9/2006

8:30 Registration, Coffee

SESSION V: MASONIC GARDENS THROUGHOUT EUROPE (II) (Snoek)

9:00 Dr. Heimerick Tromp (independent scholar, The Netherlands):

Symbolism in 18th-Century Gardens in The Netherlands: The Masonic Contribution

9:30 Wim Oers (M.Sc. University Leuven, M.Sc. University College

London, Bristol University):

Schönenberg, a Palace in the Age of the Enlightenment

10:00 Discussion

10:15 Pause

SESSION VI: MASONIC GARDENS THROUGHOUT EUROPE (III) (Scholl)

10:45 Annegreth Dietze MA (Doktorandin Universität Ås, Norwegen):

Freimaureraktivitäten in Norwegen und die Bedeutung für die norwegische Gartenkunst des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts

11:15 Erik Westengaard (Curator Nationalhistoriske Museum, Frederiksborg

/ Danske Frimurerordens Museum, Copenhagen):

Gardens of the Mind. A Walk Through the Masonic Symbolism of Three Gardens in Denmark: Louisenlund, Jægerspris and Sanderumgaard

11:45 Agata Michalska MA (PhD Candidate, Poznan University of

Technology):

The Influence of Freemasonry and Esoteric Ideas on Landscape Design during the Enlightenment in Poland

12:15 Discussion

12:30 Lunch

SESSION VII: GARDENS WITH A DIFFERENT FLAVOUR (Scholl)

14:00 Sascha Winter MA (Doktorand Universität Heidelberg):

"Wo der Tod winkt, lächelt das Leben": Gräber von Freimaurern und Rosenkreuzern in Gärten um 1800

14:30 Berit Ruge MA (Doktorandin Freie Universität Berlin):

Der Einfluss des Ordens der Gold- und Rosenkreuzer auf Gartengestaltungen der Spätaufklärung in Deutschland am Beispiel alchemistischer Symbolik

15:00 Discussion

15:15 Pause

SESSION VIII: MASONIC GARDENS THROUGHOUT EUROPE (IV) (Snoek)

15:45 Frank Albo BA (MA Student, University of Amsterdam): The Masonic Garden "Desert de Retz", near Paris'

16:15 Discussion

CLOSING SESSION (Ahn)

16:30 General discussion

16:50 The organizers: Words of thanks

17:00 End of the conference.

17:00-19:00 Second guided tour through the Schwetzingen Garden (3 x 20 participants)

Registration:

All who are interested in the subject of this conference are welcome. For organisational reasons, registration is requested before September 15th, 2006. Please register with Dr. Monika Scholl <heinz.p.frey@t-online.de>.

Dates: September 28th and 29th, 2006.

Location:

Schwetzingen Castle, Southern Wing (Südlicher Zirkel des Schlosses in Schwetzingen)

Organizers:

OVN (Foundation for the advancement of academic research into the history of freemasonry in the Netherlands), together with Vermögen und Bau Baden-Württemberg, Amt Mannheim' the Institute for the Schollarly Study of Religions and the Institute for the History of Art of the University of Heidelberg.

Conference fee:

50 Euro; reduced fee of 25 Euro for members of the OVN, the ESSWE, and (PhD) students. The conference fee is to be paid on arrival and includes tea/coffee and conference hand outs. (Lunch is excluded. Participants can have lunch at a café or restaurant of their choice near the venue.)

Reference:

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