



Sculpture and environmental design in the cultural landscape of the European countries and Latvia

Ojārs Spārītis, *Latvian Academy of Arts*

Abstract. Based on outlines from various European countries, including examples of development of historical parks in Russia and the Duchy of Courland, the author of this research offers a review of the emergence of sculpture parks of the 20th century. In evaluating individual sculpture parks created in Spain, Italy and Scandinavia, particular attention is paid to the inclusion of historical parks, their landscape elements, sculpture and environmental design objects in today's cultural environment. The aim of the article-through mentioning ensembles of matching landscape and sculptural synthesis rooted in the international experience, is to provide the reader with a visible background on the phenomenon of appearance of Latvian sculpture parks and their regional specificity.

Key words: cultural environment, cultural landscape, sculpture park, environmental design, sculpture.

Introduction

A cultural value is often judged by the quality of its components and the amount and force of its emotional effect, just as cadastral value is evaluated for land and real estate in accordance with commercially comparable criteria. It is axiomatic that a manor house placed in an ancient park, surrounded by a cultivated landscape with impressive relief, gardens, driveways complemented by paths, a mirror of water and, a close-by forest will cost more than a lonely mansion built in an empty space. In the same way, an environment rich in constituents, located in an urban and sparsely populated area, a site intact or regained from nature, well-maintained according to the artistic canons of taste, sends a specific set of signals in the direction of our consciousness.

Nowadays, it is increasingly important to define the rate and scale of development of fast-growing urban society and its cultural environment, a development that exposes and permanently transforms the environment shaped by the symbiosis between humans and nature during previous centuries. International organizations for the identification and protection of cultural heritage, both world-wide and in Latvia, including UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) are fully aware of this inevitable evolution. With the theoretical, administrative, organizational and practical assistance of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection, they seek to control and stabilize the most valuable cultural landscape ensembles and resistance of individual sites as far as

possible against the inevitable degradation and environmental transformations. The aim of such efforts is to highlight and preserve the historical values of the cultural landscape designed in accordance with the stereotypes of the style culture [4].

In order for the prospects of our civilization not to seem too pessimistic, it can be noted, for consolation, that in parallel with the transformation of the historical cultural environment and its degradation, improvements are also becoming apparent. There is ongoing correction of the planning errors of the previous decades and humanization of the Soviet time's urban and industrial environment, backyards of housing blocks are endowed with modern design elements or decorative gardening techniques. These efforts are coordinated by specialists, whose aesthetics contrast with those of backyards spontaneously landscaped by their inhabitants and playground facilities threatening children's lives. A new environment is being created, through properly designed and gradually developed areas, that become conceptually complete facilities, forming a new synthesis of landscape and environment created by architects. In it, as socially necessary, components of the cultural environment have objectively incorporated elements of the landscape formed by natural relief with its components, vegetation and man-made environmental object facilities and design articles as well as the small forms of architecture and a variety of artworks suitable for an outdoor display.

Each garden as the seventh wonder of the world

Since the times of the mythical hanging gardens laid out for the pleasure of King Nebuchadnezzar II in the Assyrian capital of Babylon over 2,500 years have passed, but literary sources, imagination, legends and history researchers' assumptions talk about the unique architectural design of the gardens laid out by skilled and talented craftsmen, the complex irrigation system and with legends entwined abundance of vegetation. It is possible that this and similar fabulous perceptions of the layout of the hanging gardens in the Persian, Mesopotamian and Anatolian partly incarnate the biblical myth of the garden of Paradise, with eternal summer and the blossoming and fruitbearing vegetation of the whole world, in the primitive harmony of which the innocent human beings-the first people - could enjoy their life in nature. [8]. It was to them-his most complete creatures- that God gave five senses to make them appreciate the earthly splendor.

Since the "creation of the world" nothing has changed. Through the senses-sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch-the individual perceives and evaluates the environment around him as useful, beautiful or ugly. The followers of the Renaissance humanism philosophy developed the idea of Utopia further and, bordering on heresy, compared the individual of the time with the Creator, as due to his talent and creative ingenuity man had become like God. Whether we look at the garden of Villa Adriana decorated with sculptures and pergola at Tivoli near Rome or wander about in Villa Pratolino of the Demidov family near Florence, admiring the rock-like Apennine Colossus made by Giovanni da Bologna, countless caves, water cascades and ravaged by time mechanical, hydraulic and acoustic devices intended to amuse and impress any visitor of the park, we have to think about the universal man of the Renaissance who, daring to challenge God, in his unbridled imagination tended to resemble him. With the help of the scientific and technical

The political semantics in the development of the historical environment

Every country has a full list of cultural monuments with fascinating examples of the historical cultural environment. For example, the closest to us-the park of the Drottningholm Palace in the vicinity of Stockholm, the park of the Peterhof Palace near St. Petersburg and let us compare their geometrically symmetric part with the park plan, the greenery, the diversity of the sculptural objects of the Versailles ensemble designed by Andre Le Notre and Jules Hardouin-Mansart or our own reconstructed Rundāle Palace according to the project motives of Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli. The historic



Fig. 1. An example of a degraded cultural environment of Zlēkas Manor
[Source: photo by O. Spārtis, 2012]



Fig. 2. The restored Mālpils Manor and the facilities of the place indicate of the possibility to adapt the components of the cultural historical environment.
[Source: photo by O. Spārtis, 2011]

possibilities of their time, using them to supplement the already rich and unique nature, the artist acted as architect or engineer, creating a new, admirable cultural environment, as a monument to the customer's whims and his unique abilities. The modern architect or artist acts likewise, through implementing the product of his imagination in the environment.

environment created according to the taste of terms of one era is valuable in its uniqueness and conformity with the nowadays neglected Baroque culture clichés. The monarchs' selfishness of the absolutist era which was comparable to their financial capabilities, the ability to unleash their architects' imagination to such an extent that they tended to outshine what had been seen and created before them, choose the most unexpected and the most effective natural environment for the royal residence to be built for the ruler's prestige which in itself would be able to arise joy and surprise.



Fig.3. The reconstructed part of the Rundāle park. [Source: photo by I. Lancmanis, 2012].

The expressiveness and emotional value of the architectural and garden ensembles of royal palaces in many European countries often result directly from their geographic and landscape location. However, it should be borne in mind that exactly the royal residence status of those palaces and park ensembles imposes the semantic burden of political programs. On the outskirts of Paris, the magnificence of the ensemble of the Versailles Palace lies in its scope and opportunity in the falling slope at the foot of the ruler's palace to create possibly the largest ensemble of a symmetrical landscape in the world. In its creation A. Le Notre used the same building materials as the Creator: earth, water, air and vegetation which were successfully complemented by architecture, spectacular fountains and garden sculpture matching the perpetual flowering, summer and allegorical feelings of youth [6]. But the selfishness of Louis XIV could be flattered the most in this ensemble by "the navel of the world" or the center feeling which was reached by the environment makers with space, architecture and artistic means: the radial water canals, opportunity from afar on the horizon to see the silhouette of the Paris towers but for identification of the monarch proclaimed as the Sun King with the Universe monarch's feelings definitely served the sculpture of Apollo set up in the center of the water basin.

The Swedish Royal Palace of Drottningholm is much smaller in scale, but to arrive at the sunny oasis with Adrian de Vries's bronze sculptures, fountains and superior court theater you do not have to go on foot or walk along dusty roads. It is possible to approach it by water with a real fleet of ships moving through the fjords and a rock labyrinth. Such directing of the a dapted environment and subdued natural disasters fully complied with the desire of the

Swedish monarchs to position themselves as the rulers of maritime super power who like Neptune reign waters. Russia claimed for this honor as well magnates who still in the time of Peter I in all the economic and cultural spheres focused on Netherland's models but after the victory in the Great Northern War fully appropriated the dominant superpower status of the northern seas that led to monarchic representation ambitions. Most visibly it was reflected in the ensemble of the Peterhof Palace and the park which in many ways can deliberately compete with countryside residences of the French and Prussian kings in Versailles and Potsdam. That is to say, in the location of the Peterhof Palace on the steep ancient sea coast of the Kronstadt Bay there has helped Nature itself so as several architects—Jean-Baptiste Le Blond, Niccolo Michetti, Mikhail Zemtsov and Johann Friedrich Braunshtein—at the foot of the Palace could create a spectacular fountain cascade and the ensemble's central axis in the direction of the sea where the view perspective is continued by an endless water mirror.

In the summer residence of the Dukes of Courland in Rundāle, the architect's genius of F.B. Rastrelli allowed Ernst Johann Biron to feel like the Land's ruler as he was in fact—the largest owner of the possession dependant on the political will of super powers. The palace and its park in the flat and vast Zemgale plain on its mood match the semantic image of "Paradise Regained". Being well acquainted with the growing territorial claims of the Russian empire, both the duke and the ingenious architect conceived and created Rundāle as an idyllic island of happiness in the sunniest part of the duchy's border and, possibly, also as a deliberate contrast to the Northern metropolis St. Petersburg with its rulers'

stark political greed to which in 1795 Courland was forced to surrender. The Rundāle Palace, surrounded by green fields and forests, and only 12 hectares large flowering baroque garden fully compensated this oblivion feeling and the Paradise, and the artificially created Paradise in the endless Zemgale plain, allowed its inhabitants to come closer in Latvia to the playful lifestyle in the clearly implemented labyrinths of the French garden and imagine illusion of the meadows of Arcadia, the Tuscan landscape and the endless summer [11].

The twentieth century

In the geographical environment specific to each country there are scenic places with high concentration of aesthetic elements of nature. It is natural that overpopulation makes people use intact natural areas and add artificially created components to them. On the paths of cognition of the world, quite naturally we find them in places where our century's human talent, organizational capabilities and resources are transformed into an analogue of the Paradise of the industrial and post-industrial 20th century. In order to escape from the growing bustle of the city, the Swedish sculptor Carl Milless created the "paradise" of his life and work in the rocky terrace of the Melar fjord in his place of residence where he had built a house and a studio. After the death of K. Milless, in 1955 the sculptor's students transformed it into a real museum with an open park-like sculpture garden.

In the Scandinavian countries, it is not the only example of a high quality new cultural environment. The Norwegian Government understood in a timely manner, the talent level of its nation's genius Gustav Vigeland and supported the idea of the sculptor to create a large-scale sculptural ensemble in the Frogner Park in Oslo. On the 850 meter long central road, on the squares of its sections as well as on the terraced hill from 1924 to 1943, there are placed around 800 bronze and granite sculptures of a symbolic content [7]. Their various aspects express the artist's philosophical reflections on the human life from birth to its physical end and reflect the diversity of individual, family and human emotions. In this park of significant size, human life passes by in time, space and spiritual dimensions as the visitor walks in the joy that is inevitably accompanied by the rich association layer encouraged by sculpture. The wealthy Danish merchant Knut W. Jensen in 1958 decided on a philanthropic project and purchased *Villa Louisiana* with just 1.2 hectares of a cultivated and greened parcel of land on the beautiful coast of the Oresund Strait. There he started to build the Museum of Contemporary Art, known as Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Louisiana Museum für Moderne Kunst). With the huge financial investment that come both from

private resources, State and local funds, in fifty years a rich collection of modern art was created there, the main part of which is devoted to sculpture. The high coastal slopes and terraces surrounded by tall trees resemble deliberately created and carefully kept landscape park. The sides of the paths, the crossroads, slopes, glades and spots, display works of about 60 of the world's top sculptors of the 20th century, creating an international and unusual cultural environment [1]. By thinking pragmatically and purchasing at the right time works by Henry Moore, Pablo Picasso, Jean Dubuffet, Alberto Giacometti, Alexander Calder, Sigmar Polke, Robert Rauschenberg, Yves Klein, Andy Warhol and sculptures of many other famous sculptors, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art has become an extremely successful financial contribution to the emotional and intellectual enrichment of the nation's citizens.

One of the key words of the Spanish city of Barcelona's attractions is the name of the legendary architect Antonio Gaudi. The wealthy businessman and magnate Eusebi Guell purchased a large area in order to lay out an English-type public park and a garden town with 60 parcels of land for sale. For this purpose, he addressed an architect full of inexhaustible fantasy. As early as 1903, A. Gaudi started to work on the implementation of the project. A. Gaudi was a fervent Catholic who tried to comprehend the theological principles of religion down to their fundamental depth. In addition his active period coincided with the peak of the Art Nouveau boom and it is no surprise that his rich imagination generated details of stylized antique architecture, decorative animal and plant forms, fantastic ornaments, Christian symbols, all of which were embodied in the park architecture, decorative sculpture and countless environmental design objects. Using materials and technologies of the modern industrial age, Gaudi's project created the grand staircase, fences, gates, pergolas and viaducts, countless sculptures, pavilions and garden facility elements [3]. Construction of the objects in the park was completed in 1914.

By means of magnate Eusebi Guell's resources, in this park laid out in the early 20th century A. Gaudi has created a synthesis of the environment and art which most of the public still perceives superficially as witty fun and colorful attraction. A few others look for and find in Guell's park a landscape plan and relation of objects that express A. Gaudi's symbolism and religious mystic thoughts on the correlation of the human, God and the Universe. The technical and aesthetic novelty of the park laid out on the slope of the natural landscape of the hill and the extraordinary expressiveness and charisma of the environmental objects created by the unusual talent of the architect were the key criteria

by which in 1984 UNESCO experts based their decision to include Guell's park in the world heritage list with the serial number 84 [12].

Among the many attractions offered by Tuscany, near the Capalbio and Garavicchio settlements tourists will find *Giardino dei Tarocchi* - the Tarocchi garden. Between 1979 and 1996, its author, the architect and sculptor Niki de Saint Phalle (1930-2002), turned the abandoned stone-quarry area in the Maremma plain into a buoyant kitsch architecture and art park. With the help of architect Mario Botta whose entrance gate serves not only as a guarantee of seriousness and quality, of the intentions of the project's creator, but also as a welcoming signboard for the commercial management of the Park, N. de Saint Phalle entirely changed the industrial location character of the abandoned stone-quarry. In the space with diverse relief de Saint Phalle placed 22 large-scale

sculptures, habitable architectural constructions and environmental design objects in such a way that the recreated garden world allow visitors to engage in naive fun and game, which at any age would make to feel years younger [10]. An experienced observer will instantly identify the artist's sources of inspiration: the ornamental mosaic of Antonio Gaudi, the effects of the surrealist compositions of Salvatore Dali and Joan Miro, the infantile and joyful color world of Friedensreich Hundertwasser and many more creatively revised quotations from the international culture collections. Whatever the artistic value of the new park, rather than moralize, it is important to recognize the instructive example of the industrial landscape being recovered and implemented into a successful -business project with the help of the environmental greening, design and art objects with a cheerful content.

If we want, we can! It comes together as it is

How big is our experience in the creation of sculpture gardens and parks? Since the 17th century, the taste canons of the Baltic Germans demanded that manor gardens, parks and later cemeteries be filled with mausoleums and mortuaries built in the forms of the baroque and classical style, and that trained gardeners install stone urns, obelisks, grieving death geniuses and angels, columns, broken oak trunk renderings and the embossed stelas in graveyards - in other words, replicas of what was created two thousand years ago in the classical period by the Greeks and Romans and the altar, grave monument forms which the Romans had developed after the adoption of Christianity. In this regard, the Alūksne and Jaungulbene parks are a positive exception, as in them the use of relief and its creation art are well suited to the placement of small architectural objects and sculptures in a dendrologically rich greenery environment. The lost romance of the parks of Remte Manor and Eleja Manor and the faded wealth of the parks in Preiļi and Varakļāni, nowadays can only delight knowing people who in the labyrinths of overgrown paths, undergrowth and in the ruins of pavilions are able to "read" the character context hidden in the the landscape. The largest but not yet studied, classical, baroque and 19th century neo-style sculpture gallery is waiting to be interpreted here in Riga - at the edge of Miera street created Great and Pokrov Cemetery, in the Torņakalns, Martiņš and Katlakalns Cemeteries on the left bank of the Daugava river. In these necropolises the park like greenery under its canopy hides monuments with a forgotten symbol, emblem and allegory language which eloquently tells about the interests of the deceased, memories of the family, changes of the kinship's genealogy and in a literary document the

best that was created by thinkers, poets and relatives of the deceased.

Since the ramparts in the 60s of the 19th century were pulled down, the public outer space of Riga has obtained a vast greening area and a landscape park where in addition to the rich variety of the rare dendrological species, water attractions were created and sculpture works with a decorative, historical and political significance are to be found. The art of laying out these parks was masterfully managed by the legendary directors of the city's gardens and parks - Johann Hermann Cigra and Georg Kufaltdt whose contribution to the art of lay-out of open parks, squares, gardens and their greening, is in any case invaluable. By following these traditions, a school of Latvian professional gardeners and landscape architects, has created in the 20s-30s and the second half of the 20th century the best parks of the time - Ziedonārzis, Grīziņkalns and Dzegužkalns reconstructions, the Brothers cemetery and Rainis cemetery ensembles.

In the overgrown greenery of the canal embankment of Riga and at the greened foothill of Bastejkalns, the 60s and 70s of the 20th century have left a number of decorative sculpture samples which are located in miniature glades, greenery, at the walking path sides and lawns. Trying to create something similar to the Elysian fields or the Louvre courtyard in Paris for the sculpture garden or public exposure in the open air, a superb quality granite and bronze collection of Latvian sculptors is located there. As in the reading-book, you can see here the poetic sculpture of Aleksandra Briede "My land" (1967), the intimate moods' work of Jānis Zariņš "The morning" (1958), the three figure composition of Pārsla Zaļkalne "Peace dance" (1970), the sculpture



Fig. 4. Arvīds Voitkāns. A memorial stone to the camera man Gvido Zvaigzne near Bastejkalns in Riga [Source: photo by O. Spārītis, 2007]



Fig. 5. The commemoration ensemble of the centenary of the Song Festival as a complex structure in the historic Ķeizardārzs in Riga with a pool, a memorial wall and a rough granite monument [Source: photo by P. Apinis, 2007]



Fig. 6. Just a few decades the cultural environment of the Old Town of Riga was decorated by the Sculpture Garden. In the picture- the Lithuanian sculptor Roberts Antinis (senior) at his work in 1976 [Source: photo from the archive of R. Čaupova]

of Mirdza Lukaža “In the bathhouse” (1958), the bronze sculpture “The steed” made by the children’s favorite sculptor Gaida Grundberga (1970) and several others. As the documents of the tragic events of January 1991, among the lyrical nature of the artwork there are placed the red-brown granite memorial stones to the shot cameramen Andris Slapiņš, Gvido Zvaigzne, the militia officer Sergey Kononenko, the pupil Edijs Riekstiņš. Made by the sculptor Arvīds Voitkāns (1941-2009), these laconic forms remind of expressive victims’ altars but due to the colorfulness of their natural material and simple form, they could still become part of the landscape of Bastejkalns and the canal embankment being not in conflict with the decorative sculpture placed there. The exceptional density of the sculptural works in this area is already approaching the limit of risk when the spatial concept of the whole ensemble becomes problematic and questionable. It raises the question: are sculpture concentrations of different handwritings accidental in this place, so to speak, due to the good will exaggerating the number of works of sculpture in a limited area and intentionally provoking the artistic impression of abundance? It can be responded with a counter question: will a lower density of anthropomorphic sculpture in this area of the park be more favorable to the meditative nature of reflection and encourage philosophical reflection on universal rhythms of nature and coherences? Another example. In honor of the centenary of the General Latvian Song Festival in 1973, the former Ķeizardārzs which in the inter-war period had become Viesturdārzs, was renamed to the Song Festival Park and in its center a pool, a memorial wall with composer bas-reliefs was placed, and as a monument was erected from a boulder weighing 36 tons.

The structure of the park since its founding in 1711 has been changed many times and the once baroque geometric Ķeizardārzs with the summer residence has in the course of time acquired the character of a landscape park. The creation of an ensemble in the center for commemoration of the centenary of the Song Festival in 1973 (architect Georgs Baumanis) introduced in its landscape a stylistically incompatible scale and element contrasts that received political acceptance. It corresponded to the voluntary decisions of the Soviet ideology to allow any destructive or conflicting activities in the historic environment if they displayed a sharply negative attitude to the past heritage—in this case, towards the garden and the park created in the period of Tsarist Russia with its semantic associations and with the political symbols of the monarchy or the independent Latvia.

It comes together and even well comes together

In the restricted area between the bastion built for the defense of the Riga Castle and the horse stables or, more specifically, in the northern side of the castle in the early 19th century, there was laid out a small—around 0.4 hectares large—flower garden with walkways, a fountain pool, separate plantings of trees and shrubs. Organizing the first sculpture exhibition in the open air, the architect Ivars Strautmanis in 1967 proposed to use for this purpose the closed garden of the castle [5]. The successful precedent created the basis for a stable and popular international sculpture exhibition, for organizing of exhibitions exactly in this area, urging to rename the garden in the Sculpture Garden. It is true that every year and even more often, the number of sculptural objects and location in the Sculpture Garden changed several times, thus we cannot talk about a long-term and lasting exposure. With the Riga Castle being changed to the residence of the State President in 1995, the Sculpture Garden ceased to exist as a publicly accessible sculpture exposition and became a closed, green inner garden, part of the architectural ensemble.

Since the nationwide celebration of the 150th birthday of Krišjānis Barons in 1985, we can also talk about the first large-scale and consciously designed sculpture park of the Gauja valley surrounded by the steep slopes of a narrow tongue of land in the area of the former fruit garden and walking park of Turaida Castle Manor. From the point of view of aesthetics of the landscape, in the extremely well chosen, a minutely undulated mountain plateau, surrounded by groups of pictorial trees, by the creative support of the administration of the Turaida Museum (now called in the funny name, not found in any dictionary of the Museum Reserve), a single author's—painter and sculptor's Indulis Ranka—sculpture park started its existence. Originally, in it, there were placed around 10 large-sized sculptural works, chambers-style in dimensions, made of stone which based on the artist's own feelings and opinion were freely placed in the landscape and arranged both by the route principle of rich philosophical associations and principles of the creation of a pictorial composition. In subsequent years, the number of sculptures has grown and in 2012 it reached 25 monumental granite sculpture works which, to some extent, can compete with Gustav Vigeland's sculpture park in Oslo. They encourage reflections on individual and universal themes, on the interaction between people and part of the family, modern societies, traditional culture and mythology paradigms. The sculptures convince through their poetically expressed language



Fig. 7. Indulis Ranka. "Veļu boulder" in the sculpture garden of Folk-Song Hill /Dainu kalns/ in Turaida [Source: photo by V. Mašnovskis, 2011]



Fig. 8. In the landscape of the ancient valley of the Abava river there are organically included the objects of the exposition of Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum – architecture, objects of the environmental design, installations. The installation created by the sculptor Kalvis Zālītis "The ferryman" in Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum in 2002 [Source: photo by O. Feldbergs]

by way of generalized images, stone processing textures and completely irrational moments—such as the stone graininess, texture, color alteration and attempts to discover pictorial moments of the stone surface. It is possible, of course, to discuss if the area limited by the dimensions of the mountain plateau for a significant number of sculptures is too small or if the viewing distance of each sculpture is sufficient for an intimate dialogue of the visitor with the artwork, if the emotional strength of the sculpture is not masked by the energy of another sculpture work? It is possible that the architect's spatial vision and the choice different from the current viewpoints would lead to another, perhaps a looser location of the sculptures, but Dainu Hill is a typical single author's concept of artwork from conception to realization. It can be liked or subjectively not liked but just because it is the author's responsibility and success story, it bounces off any arrows of criticism.

In the end phase of the era saturated with the Soviet ideology—in the 80s of the last century,

a number of Latvian sculptors, including Ojārs Feldbergs, oriented their art in the direction of the Western cultural influence. Regaining of the State's independence, created, for personalities full of initiative, pre-conditions for the implementation of their initiative and O. Feldbergs used it in a full extent. With the support of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection and using the opportunities provided by international sources of financing already in 1992, he privatized around 150 hectares of land in the picturesque valley of the Abava river where he arranged a private Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum. This vast area is rich with historical manor buildings, an attractive relief, diverse vegetation, water mirror in the winding banks of the Abava river and other natural resources which by the help of the 19th century graphics and photos of the 20th century provides a great deal of attractiveness. It was successfully invested by sculptor O. Feldbergs in his art and business project. Through regular international symposia, the Latvian and Baltic sculptors and installation authors' open-air workshops, performances and other attractive contemporary art promotions, during the twenty years of the existence of the Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum created by O. Feldbergs, several dozens of artworks have been collected. Among them there are sculptures created from eco-friendly materials, land art objects with a meditative character and sometimes works devoted to the historical relief of Kurzeme, the Balt mythology, space themes which use permanent components as building materials, such as the landscape of the ancient valley of the Abava river, the land relief, soil and trees and also the variable "materials" –the man, seasons, atmosphere, light, the sky, bird songs and other elements found in nature at the level of feelings. The sculptures and installations are freely located in the wide area of the museum and viewing of the significant collection for every guest is an attractive and meditative journey made both in space and time and a vivid emotional adventure as well. For the protection of historical and valuable cultural landscape and its adaptation to modern forms of use, for a skillful management of the process, for the reflection of essential for the culture spiritual searches and trends in artworks, Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum created by Ojārs Feldbergs has won with the UNESCO awarded-the Swedish born actress's of Greek origin and politician's Melina Mercouri (Melina Rezevska, 1920-1994) award. It is no wonder that such international class experts as Jimena Blazkuez Abascal, Valerie Varags and Raul Rispa who are familiar with sculpture parks across Europe and who have devoted to this theme a considerable research "Sculpture Parks in Europe. Art and Landscape Guide", have recognized exactly Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum created by the sculptor Ojārs Feldbergs as the only sculpture park to be taken seriously in the Baltic States [2].



Fig. 9. The sculptural group "Suitu wives" created by Līvija Rezevska 1980) in the town garden of Kuldīga [Source: photo by O. Spārītis, 2012]



Fig. 10. The restored Rūmene Manor and the perfectly attended park have become a benchmark for the attitude full of understanding in the preservation of the historical cultural environment [Source: photo by O. Spārītis, 2012]



Fig. 11. Ernests Vītiņš. The glass sculpture "Stilla" in the park of Rūmene Manor [Source: photo by E. Vītiņš, 2012]

In the park of Kuldīga Livinian Order Castle, no less rich with expressive environmental components which is known by the name of Kuldīga Cultural and Recreational Park or in abbreviated form as the Town Garden, since 1970 in a number of active landscape planning periods there are located twenty-two sculptures made by the sculptor Līvija Rezevska (1926-2004). In 1951, she graduated from the Sculpture masters' workshop led by the Latvian sculpture classic Teodors Zaļkalns of the Latvian Academy of Art with the

sculpture "The violin player Lida Rubene" which has found a place full of poetic moods on the bank of the Venta river near the building of the Kuldīga Region Museum. Other sculptures, in the 1950s-1980s made of concrete, bronze, fire clay and granite, are successfully included in the Town Garden reconstructed in 2009-2011 that for the art of Līga Rezevska as a freeman of the town of Kuldīga has become a permanent sculpture garden. The Town Garden of Kuldīga is a landscape complex structure in the improvement and use of which the landscape architects and designers have had to count on a small area-typical variable ground relief, the foundations and fragments of ruins of the Livonian Knight Order Castle, a large variety of historical buildings, old trees and accents of the modern ornamental gardening, a complicated system of walkways, stairs and bridges adapted to the significant flow of the town's residents and tourists as well as the need for concentrated, safe area to locate the sculptor's invaluable and generous donation to the town. On the way to the nomination of the historic center of Kuldīga and the cultural landscape to be included in the list of the UNESCO world cultural heritage, the organizational and practical measures of the local government of Kuldīga by investing significant resources and imagination of architects in the improvement of the design environment of the town, in raising the aesthetic quality of the landscape and in exposing the cultural values of their own district can be welcomed only approvingly.

A completely new quality in the preservation and development of the cultural environment is shown by individual initiatives in restoring residential buildings of manors and historical parks in the ensembles of manors as well as engaging in the maintenance of the landscape in a wider area. Two of these positive examples, Kukši Manor and Rūmene Manor are located near Kandava in the area of Kurzeme and they are available for public viewing. The residential building of Kukši Manor houses a high class hotel, conference center and a popular restaurant. The owner of the complex-Daniels Jahn by his own ingenuity, efforts and resources maintains the bank of the mill pond, as a real element of economic activity of the Manor builds a rubble masonry fence to create a special micro-climate near the former servants' house, as a preventive measure maintains the old park trees and supplements the landscape with the pergola, pavilions, a boat dock, fountains and sculptures matching the garden scale. Another example-the Karlsons family estate-Rūmene Manor with 60 acres of land which include a significant group of household buildings, a park planted in the 19th century, a small lake, cultivated meadows and fields in the relief landscape-since 2009 is excellently maintained, kept in an excellent technical and visual

quality and under the supervision of professional architects is constantly cared for.

By the care of the owner of the Manor-Dana Beldiman-Karlsons, the representative surroundings of the Manor are being brought to life- the edge of the lake, the bridges, the park's paths and glades, flower beds, the decorative bushes and dendrological plantations. The household buildings contain hotel rooms and are also meant for future use as a SPA complex, as well as souvenir or craft outlets for tourists. Respecting the owners' exquisite taste which focuses on the understanding of modern art and integration in the interiors of the Manor's residential house and the surrounding area, since summer of 2012 the park of Rūmene has also become an exhibition place of contemporary sculpture. From August 27 to September 30, the young artist, graduate of the Latvian Academy of Arts-Ernest Vītiņš, MA, exhibited his glass sculptures created within the past year [9]. Both on the facade of the residential house and the household building in the yard, as well as deeper in the lawn and in the park, the sculptures allow visitors to admire the monumental and slightly stylized forms and feel the atmospheric phenomenon, light refraction and reflection in this amorphous and so unusual material of the sculptures.



Fig. 12. Ernests Vītiņš. The glass sculpture "Ascendit" in the household yard of Rūmene Manor
[Source: photo by E. Vītiņš, 2012]

In designing and modeling the forms of the sculptures in the spatial 3D projection, the author got cut out stencils in the scale of 1: 1. By means of a transparent binder paste the artist glued the individual sheets of glass cut based on the stencils, creating a vertical obelisk-like stylized organic forms. The inspiration source for these sculptures has been nature, looking at the changing nature of which, E. Vītiņš could reveal both the lively power of growth and artistic challenges, experimenting with glass edges and the texture effect of the edges. From the semi-transparent obelisks glued together from glass of different thickness and tonality, the stylized sprouts and seedlings very vividly involve in the changes of the black-and-white of the environment and in the playful mood of a game.

In reflecting the growth as a process, the apparent heaviness of the artist's sculptures and the greenish bluish materiality of the glass as the artistic means of expression convince of the author's ability to academically perfectly solve complex compositional tasks and defeat the apparent contrast of the weight and the body. To the contrary - the massive, sometimes heavy sculptures fascinate with the hidden paradox between the ease of the conception and the apparent heaviness of the material. In the sculptures "Pullulare", "Ascendit", "Stilla" and "Occultis", the transparency and the rich light reflections create an interaction with the surrounding environment-the lawn, trees, the sky and lighting. Thus, the park of Rūmene Manor as a botanical and dendrological system obtains a modern supplementation with stylized sculptures of nature images and the human body organically incorporated into the park's landscape. This practice is both to be supported and encouraged in exactly the same way as a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary dialogue between the types of art and genres predicting surprising results. The park's historic plantations should not be perceived as a dead dogma but as an open system where there are also possible modern intrusion by objects of a rather innovative nature of forms and materials.

Conclusion

In summing up the international and the Latvian experience both in the adapting of a historic environment to the modern sculpture respected at maximum, exposition of the environmental design, applied art and a successful transformation of partially destroyed cultural landscape in a new content and emotional quality ensembles, may be admitted as **flexibility of the modern approach** and a skill to deal with a historically valuable and with a degraded cultural landscape. Everything becomes dependent on each individual case where the landscape architects, designers, sculptors and installation authors are able to creatively use the artistic style of the previous



Fig. 13. Ernests Vītiņš. The glass sculpture „Pullulare” in the park of Rūmene Manor [Source: photo by E. Vītiņš, 2012]

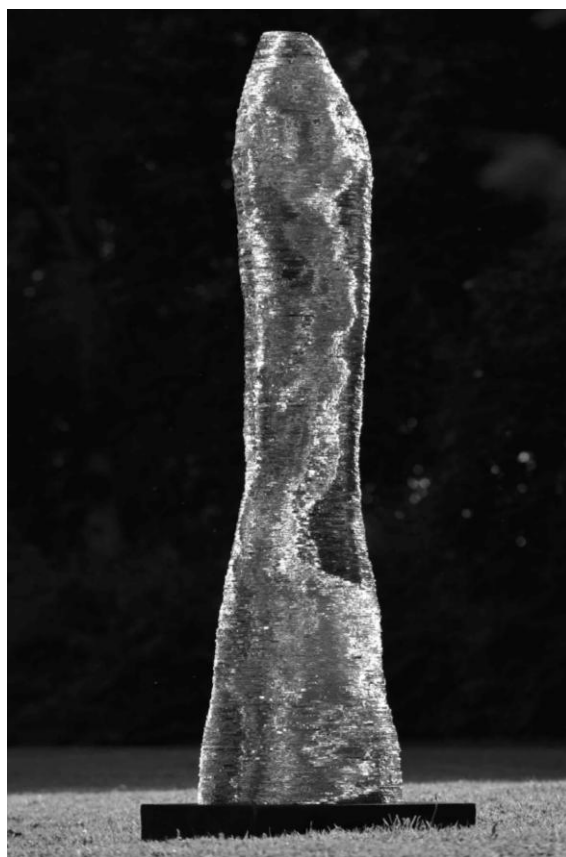


Fig. 14. Ernests Vītiņš. The glass sculpture "Occultis" in the large glade of Rūmene Manor [Source: photo by E. Vītiņš, 2012]

centuries, the created values under the influence of taste and, without harming the traditional cultural landscape, to offer full-blooded, in terms of content and expression, innovative environmental art ensembles, sculpture gardens and parks. By comparing of the adaptation and transformation examples of the Latvian cultural landscape with the international context there a stable confidence about our high professional qualifications and professional skills is obtained, that sensitively matches historically important cultural objects with modern elements supplementing the environment and creating completely new and convincing artistic systems.

References

1. **Abascal Blazquez, J., Varas, V., Rispa, R.** *Skulpturen-Parks in Europa. Ein Kunst-und Landschaftsführer.* Birkhäuser – Verlag für Architektur, Basel – Boston – Berlin, 2006, S. 36.-39.
2. **Abascal Blazquez, J., Varas, V., Rispa, R.** *Skulpturen-Parks in Europa. Ein Kunst-und Landschaftsführer.* Birkhäuser – Verlag für Architektur, Basel – Boston – Berlin, 2006, S. 132.-133.
3. **Bassegoda i Nonell, J.** *Gaudi. Alle Werke.* Triangle Postals. Sent Lluís, Menorca, 2007, p. 64-75.
4. **Biørnstad, M.** *Cultural-Environmental Preservation in a European Future./ Cultural Heritage and Preservation.* Special editor Klas-Göran Selinge. National Atlas of Sweden, 1994, p.176-177.
5. **Dāvidsone, I.** *Rīgas dārzi un parki.* Liesma, Rīga, 1988, 97.lpp.
6. *Die Kunst des Barock. Architektur. Skulptur. Malerei.* Hrsg. Von Rolf Toman. Koenemann Verlag, Koeln, 1997, S. 133.
7. **Dürre, S.** *Seemanns Lexikon der Skulptur.* E.A. Seemann, Leipzig, 2007, S. 441.
8. **Enge, T. O., Schroeder, C. F.** *Gartenkunst in Europa 1450-1800.* Benedikt Taschen Verlag, Koeln, 1990, S. 9.
9. **Ernesto** (Vītiņš, Ernests). *Monumentālā skulptūra stiklā.* Rūmenes muiža, 2012.
10. **Pozzana, M.** *Gardens of Florence and Tuscany. A Complete Goide.* Giunti, Firenze, 2001, p. 146-147.
11. *Rundāles pils.* Jumava, Rīga, 2009, 185.-186. lpp.
12. **Veser, T.** *Schätze der Menschheit.* Frederking & Thaler, München, 1995, S. 200.

INFORMATION ABOUT AUTHOR:

Ojārs Spārītis (born in 1955) - Habilitated Doctor of Arts, the professor of the Latvian Academy of Arts studies the diverse cultural heritage of Latvia. A particular interest is focused on the issues of the sacral architecture and the art, formation of the cultural environment, public sculptural iconography and social contexts. He has published several monographs and articles on this subject.

Kopsavilkums. Raksta sākumdaļa veltīta vēsturiski veidojušās kultūrainavas tipa – parka un dārza – izmantojumam tēlniecības, mazo formu arhitektūras un vides dizaina objektu eksponēšanai. Lai ieskicētu tēmas kontekstu, autors ir pievērsies gan mītiska, gan reāli renesanses un baroka laikmetā pastāvējušu parku raksturojumam. Rakstā pieminēti arī 18. gadsimta Krievijas un Kurzemes hercogistes kultūrā augstāko kvalitāti sasniegušo ģeometriskā franču tipa dārza paraugi – Pēterhofas un Rundāles piļu ansambļos iekļautie parki. Taču galvenā vērība ir pievērsta starptautiskajam skulptūru parku rašanās fenomenam 20. gadsimta dārzu mākslā, kuras spilgtākie piemēri ir Karla Millesas villas dārzs Stokholmā, Gustava Vīgelāna veidotais Frognera parks Oslo, Luizianas Modernās mākslas muzeja skulptūru kolekcija Villa Louisiana parkā Dānijā netālu no Kopenhāgenas, Giela parks Barselonā un Taroki dārzs Toskānas reģionā Itālijā. Īsi raksturoto Eiropas zemju skulptūru parku veidošanas pieredze kopš 1960. gadiem ir ietekmējusi arī mūsu zemes kultūrainavu un savā reģionāli savdabīgajā formā atspoguļojas vides un tēlniecības sintēzes ansambļos Rīgā un Latvijā. No tradicionālā ainavu parkā ievietotu tēlniecības darbu eksponēšanas pieredzes Rīgas kanālmalas apstādījumos, Dziesmu svētku parkā un kopš 1995. gada slēgtajā Skulptūru dārzā 20. gadsimta beigās un 21. gadsimta sākumā ir attīstījusies moderna pieeja parka, kultivētas ainavas un tēlniecības darbu sintēzes uzdevumiem. Dainu kalns Turaidā, Pedvāles Brīvdabas mākslas muzejs un profesionāli koptais Rūmenes muižas parks ar tajos ievietotām skulptūrām liecina gan par radošu vēsturiskās vides kopšanas un labiekārtošanas veiksmi, gan par pilnīgi novatorisku pieeju jaunu selektīvi izraudzītas ainavas, parku un dārzu mākslas ansambļu veidošanas praksei mūsdienās.