

postmodern babble of later structures laying claim to the skyline of Dallas.

Designed and built during the heady days of the Texas boom, Fountain Place is a testament to the potential of aesthetic modernism and a statement of its limitations. It bears the mark of genius in its intuitive brilliance and in its meticulously crafted yet extravagantly bestowed resources. Like so many aesthetic creations that come to assume a pivotal place within the historical construction of any period of design and art, Fountain Place is both a definitive work within its genre and a summation of the ideas and methods that initiated and nurtured it. Conceived of as a kind of abstract purity (more a reaction than a response to the site), the garden delights the visitor and offers a suspension of context, taking the viewer into a sumptuous creation of space and time apart from all that surrounds the garden. Obviously and intensely manmade, yet offering the finest of nature's respites in the shade of tall trees and the sound of moving water, the plaza becomes a garden, perhaps the best habitat for the human species.

The essayist Michael Pollan wrote in his allegorical work on gardening, *Second Nature*, that much of what is polemically cited as "ecological" in contemporary literature is really no more than "another instance of moralism's triumph over aesthetics in the American garden." He offers an alternative view of the garden: an intensely cultural, built creation that engages the imagination and the senses and provides "a passage somewhere else – to the personal and shared past its scents evoke, to the distant places to which its forms allude." Pollan envisions gardens as existing both "here" and "there." Those that are all "here" end up being "slack, insipid, indistinct from the surrounding landscape"; whereas gardens that are all "there" may be "cold or abstract," offering no connection to the user. Kiley's garden in downtown Dallas is both "here" and "there." It is both a real place and an imaginary place, a thing apart. As Michael Pollan might say, Fountain Place is "a trope; a trope that gives real shade."⁶ ■

1 Katsuhiko Ichinowatari, *Landscape Design: Works of Dan Kiley*, *Process Architecture* no. 33 (Tokyo, 1982), p. 18.

2 Joel Warren Barna, "Two Dallas Towers," *Texas Architect*, July-August 1987, p. 43.

3 Charles W. Moore, William J. Mitchell, and William Turnbull, Jr., *The Poetics of Gardens* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), p. 158.

4 Geoffrey Jellicoe and Susan Jellicoe, *The Landscape of Man* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), p. 156.

5 Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation, 1980.

6 Michael Pollan, *Second Nature* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991), pp. 232, 243–44.

An Interview With C. C. Pat Fleming

ANNE SCHLUMBERGER BOHNN,
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STEPHEN FOX



C. C. PAT FLEMING is the dean of Texas landscape architects. In practice in Houston since 1937, he has been instrumental in formulating a set of gardening conventions that Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller perceptively characterized when they wrote in *The Golden Age of American Gardens*: "Today, broadleaf evergreen gardens in a woodland setting seem uninventive, but in the twenties and thirties they were something new in Texas. Just like white columns, camellias and azaleas stood for Southern conservatism, for the antebellum Southern tradition revived and revised to fit the large suburban estate lot."¹

Fleming belongs to the generation of landscape architects who established the profession in Texas. As Sadie Gwin Blackburn documents in her essay "The Evolution of the Houston Landscape" in *Houston's Forgotten Heritage*, professional landscape gardeners were active in Houston by the 1840s, and landscape architects unsuccessfully attempted to maintain practices in Houston beginning in the 1910s. But prior to the early 1930s, it was Houston nurserymen, such as Edward Teas, who dominated residential landscape installation.² The archives of the landscape architects and city planners Hare & Hare, best known for their public planning commissions in Texas, contain a large collection of drawings of private garden designs for local clients, suggesting the void this Kansas City–based firm was called on to fill in Houston in the 1920s.³

Estelle B. Sharp, widow of the oil tool manufacturer Walter B. Sharp, responded to this condition by turning her estate on Main Street into the Houston Studio Gardens and setting the young landscape architect Ruth London up in practice in 1930.⁴ Miss London had the patronage of "all the garden club ladies," as Fleming's client and devoted friend, Alice E. Pratt,

recalls.⁵ But an enthusiasm for garden design seized Houston's elite in the 1930s that one landscape architect alone could not satisfy. Ellen B. Shipman of New York, now recognized as one of the outstanding American landscape architects of the 20th century, designed gardens in the mid-1930s for Mrs. Cleveland Sewall, Mr. and Mrs. John E. Green, and Mrs. Stephen P. Farish in River Oaks and for Mrs. Richard W. Neff in Broadacres. Several years after Pat Fleming and his partner, Albert E. Sheppard, opened their office in the River Oaks Center, Ralph Ellis Gunn came to Houston in 1940 to represent the Jungle Gardens nursery of Avery Island, Louisiana. Fleming, Miss London, Gunn, and J. Allen Myers, Jr., an instructor in landscape architecture at Texas A&M, were the founding members of the profession in Houston, as were their counterparts in Dallas, Joe Lambert of the Lambert Landscape Company and Marie and Arthur E. Berger.

A state as big as Texas provided rich opportunities for this generation, as a review of Pat Fleming's body of work makes clear. His early commissions – notably the Diana Garden at Bayou Bend for Ima Hogg and, next door, the Woodland Garden at Dogwoods for Mr. and Mrs. Mike Hogg – were primarily residential, although his earliest experiences after leaving architecture school at the University of Texas in 1930 were with public landscaping projects. He worked for the Austin landscape contractor Mrs. C. B. Whitehead in carrying out Hare & Hare's planting plan at the University of Texas, part of Paul Philippe Cret's reconstruction of the campus between 1930 and 1933. Between 1934 and 1935, as a junior-grade landscape architect, he designed Palmetto State Park near Gonzales, a Civilian Conservation Corps project, and between 1935 and 1936 he was supervising landscape architect at the San Jacinto Battlegrounds State Park.⁶ It was this final project that brought him to Houston.

Fleming & Sheppard were responsible for the gardens of many of the houses that John F. Staub designed in River Oaks, Shadyside, and Broadacres in the 1930s and early 1940s. Fleming's growing reputation brought him work in the affluent suburbs of other Texas cities. He designed estate gardens for Mr. and Mrs. J. Cooke Wilson in Beaumont, for Mr. and Mrs. Pio Crespi in Dallas, for Governor and Mrs. Allen Shivers in Austin, and for Mr. and Mrs. George Parker and Marion Koogler McNay in San Antonio. He was responsible for the grand gardens of Emma Louise Biedenharn in Monroe, Louisiana, and he carried out landscape work for General and Mrs. Kemper Williams, founders of the Historic New Orleans

Collection, in New Orleans. Injuries that Fleming sustained in a car-racing accident kept him out of military service during World War II. Instead, from 1943 to 1945 he served as the first director of the combined Department of Parks and Recreation. In 1936, before he had even established residence in Houston, Fleming was appointed by Mayor R. H. Fonville to the City Planning Commission. In 1938 Mayor Fonville appointed him as one of the original commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Houston.

At the end of the war, Fleming returned to private practice, establishing the firm that came to be called Fleming Planning Associates, which he headed until 1970. Although he resumed the design of small estate gardens (such as that of Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Smith in 1946), Fleming responded dexterously to new trends in design. This is particularly visible in his landscaping of the modernist pavilion that Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr., designed as his family home in 1950, with its broadly curved, grass-surfaced patio terrace and grassed terrace steps.

The suburbanization of Houston in the 1950s brought new professional opportunities to Fleming. His firm designed the first corporate "campus" in Houston, the 27-acre grounds of the Prudential Building on Holcombe Boulevard of 1952. It is indicative of the intelligence, durability, and quality of Fleming's landscape design that since acquiring the Prudential property nearly 20 years ago, the University of Texas Health Science Center has continued to maintain the grounds, which include a beautifully detailed swimming pool terrace, a smaller version of the now-lost poolside gardens of the Shamrock Hotel.

During the 1960s, Fleming Planning Associates designed landscape installations of garden apartment complexes in Houston and New Orleans. Quite visible was such nonresidential work as the Bellaire branch building of Southwestern Savings Association on Bellaire Boulevard of 1960 and the R. E. "Bob" Smith Fountain at Smith and Polk downtown of 1970. Fleming also designed the George Parker Memorial Garden of 1966 alongside the Margarite B. Parker Chapel by Ford, Powell & Carson at Trinity University in San Antonio.

Pat Fleming retired in 1970, closing his office and moving to Kerrville. In 1972 he married the widowed Mrs. Erwin W. Smith of Houston, and for his new wife he designed and built a house and garden at Jack Rabbit Hill outside Kerrville. During the years of his marriage to Mrs. Smith, Fleming continued to accept selected commissions in Houston. One was the design of new gardens for Mr. and Mrs.

Pierre M. Schlumberger in River Oaks in 1980. The third garden he had designed for the Schlumbergers, it demonstrates the evolution of his sensibility. Rather than axially framing a tapis vert with linear plantings of shrubs and trees, Fleming laid out the Schlumberger garden as a relaxed sequence of interlocked spaces, primarily planted or paved in character.⁷

Since resuming his professional practice in Houston in the mid-1980s, Pat Fleming still produces new residential garden designs (often in association with landscape architect Dennis Wright), assists longtime clients with alterations and adjustments to their gardens, and carries out new nonresidential work, such as the installation of gardens on the grounds of the Oscar F. Holcombe estate on Holcombe Boulevard, which is being rehabilitated as the Hospice at the Medical Center (formerly the New Age Hospice). Many of Fleming's recent gardens tend to be landscape installations adjacent to swimming pools and patios and oriented to glass-walled family rooms, such as the garden he designed for Mr. and Mrs. James A. Rickard in River Oaks in 1988.

Whether grand or modest, the gardens of Pat Fleming reinforce a landscape tradition that he helped formulate over a half-century ago. Employing, and often combining, the principles of classical and picturesque garden design, Fleming works with live oaks and magnolias; yaupon, ligustrum, and Japanese yew; jasmine and monkey grass; and azaleas and roses to domesticate the coastal prairie with shade, greenery, color, fragrance, and spatial definition. His is a personal crusade, waged over 50 years, to combat the pervasive rawness of Houston and demonstrate with what grace and ease this city lends itself to becoming a livable landscape.

1 Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller, *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates, 1890–1940* (New York: Harry N. Abrams in association with the Garden Club of America, 1991), p. 242.

2 Sadie Gwin Blackburn, "The Evolution of the Houston Landscape," in Dorothy Knox Howe Houghton, Barrie M. Scardino, Sadie Gwin Blackburn, and Katherine S. Howe, *Houston's Forgotten Heritage: Landscapes, Houses, Interiors, 1824–1914* (Houston: Rice University Press, 1991), pp. 22–23, 29–30, 51–53.

3 The Hare & Hare Collection at the Houston Public Library's Houston Metropolitan Research Center contains drawings for 25 residential garden design

commissions. How many of these designs were carried out has not been determined.

4 The precise activities of Mrs. Sharp's Houston Studio Gardens have yet to be researched. Mrs. Sharp converted her house into an office building where John F. Staub, Birdsall P. Briscoe, Maurice J. Sullivan, and other Houston architects maintained their studios until Mrs. Sharp sold the property to Sears, Roebuck & Company, which built its South Main store on the site in 1940. Ruth London is first listed in the 1930–31 issue of the *Houston City Directory* and is last listed in the 1965 issue. Griswold and Weller identify her as a graduate of the Lowthorpe School, class of 1928 (Griswold and Weller, p. 241).

5 Interview with Mrs. Fletcher Pratt, 11 August 1992.

6 James Wright Steely, *CCC: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Texas State Parks* (Austin: Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, 1986), unpaginated. Steely profiles the various state parks – including Palmetto State Park – developed with Civilian Conservation Corps labor. Unfortunately, he does not identify any of the landscape architects involved.

7 Interview with Mrs. Pierre M. Schlumberger, 12 August 1992. See also Mary Uhrbrock, "Garden View," *Houston Home & Garden* (March 1986), pp. 48–57. On the work of Pat Fleming, see also "Gardens at Houston and River Oaks, Texas," *Landscape Architecture* 29 (1938), pp. 183–91; "Gardens by Fleming," *Houston Post*, 21 November 1948; Mary Uhrbrock, "A Man for All Seasons," *Houston Home & Garden* (January 1985), pp. 98–103; and Sarah Bergner, "C. C. Pat Fleming: The Man for All Seasons," *Pinnacle*, vol. 5, p. 5.



Fleming & Sheppard, Diana Garden, Bayou Bend, 1937. Fleming's gardens were designed as settings for social events, especially before air conditioning became prevalent. On August 1, 1940, Mary Jane Walne and Whitfield H. Marshall were married in the Diana Garden.

Cite When and where were you born?

PF I was born in Beaumont, Texas, on February 13, 1909. We moved to Arizona in 1918, and I returned from Arizona in 1928. When I was 19 years old, I studied architecture at the University of Texas, but in chemistry I burned my eyes so seriously I had to give up. Then I came up with a project to create a bunch of good-looking ornamental iron furniture with which I

nursery type, who were politically active. She had all the University of Texas work tied up, but she never did any design work, just contractual work. Mr. Hare of Kansas City laid out the University of Texas campus in 1930, and Mrs. Whitehead got the job as landscape contractor. I honestly didn't know one bush from another. It never occurred to me that landscaping could be fascinating. Mrs. Whitehead and I spent an afternoon

together, and she conceived a trust in me. She helped me buy a brand new car and gave me two brand new, good-looking, tailor-made suits and put me on the road to go buy all the bushes and trees and things that that job needed. I went up to Oklahoma and all over Texas buying these things. Every time I came to a nursery, I would ask, "Now what is this, what is that thing, what does it do?" Those people were extremely patient with me and very kind. They all realized that I was just a promising two-bit kid. So often we would spend the whole morning talking about pittosporum, for example – how many varieties and variations, whether they were this or

that, if they would do well in this area and not in another.

When I left that job at the University of Texas, I was invited to come work for the National Parks Service. I never had a passion for plants, but I was interested and I remembered a lot. Also – another great asset to me – I met a perfectly wonderful older lady, Mrs. W. J. Hildebrand. Mrs. Hildebrand was a widow and a great amateur botanist. She knew all the great plant people of our country. Talk about wildflowers is so commonplace now, it doesn't seem unusual. There was a time when most Texans didn't even know we had wildflowers. Mrs. Hildebrand had a lot to do with making us conscious.

Cite Was she from Beaumont?

PF No, she was from Gonzales, Texas. And it was Mrs. Hildebrand who came out to Palmetto State Park and pointed out to me that we were working in one of the most unusual areas in America. It is a combination of shallow soils and warm springs and unusual, ancient plant material. There were plants growing there that had continued down through maybe three or four thousand years. Everything east of the Mississippi, I'm talking about right on

the banks of the Mississippi, was growing in this limited park area. We built all types of retaining walls. And I always built those walls as if they were natural outcroppings and with waterfalls and pools.

Cite What brought you to Houston?

PF The reason I came to Houston is that I was working for the National Parks Service at that time as a junior-grade landscape architect, and I was asked to come down to supervise the landscape development of the San Jacinto Battlegrounds. Otherwise, I would probably have lived elsewhere in this country. When that project was finished, I discovered that I loved Houston. I liked everything about it. I was appointed a member of the City Planning Commission and the housing authority. I have never wished to leave here. Houston has become a part of me, and I think I'm a part of Houston.

Cite When did you start your own practice?

PF 1937.

Cite How did you meet your first clients in Houston?

PF In those days different women's clubs were always looking for speakers. I was a fairly nice looking person at that time, so they often asked me to come and give a lecture. After the lecture there was always this crowding in around you, partly because they wanted to get their picture taken and partly because they really were interested in the idea of a planned landscape, which was such a novelty. They had been accustomed to simply calling up Mr. Teas or some other nursery. Teas was the most important nursery and, of course, the Japanese Nursery was good. And they simply came out and planted your place. Some of them were honestly nice, but more often you would have a hopeless hodgepodge. I remember first getting this type of job because my first client said: "I just didn't realize anybody planned gardens. I have an interior decorator I just love, but I didn't realize that people planned the outside." So she said, "How do you charge?" and I said: "Well, I have a very simple schedule. I work by the hour. I'll be happy to come and work for you for as long as you wish or for as short a time as you wish." And she looked at me and said, "Are you engaged for lunch?" So I went on and had lunch with her.

Cite Who was that client?

PF Mrs. Bowles. John Staub built that house. It was one of my favorite houses from the very beginning. The house was a natural brick at that time, and the green



Fleming & Sheppard, Woodland Garden, Dogwoods, 1939.

could earn my way to Europe, and I again burned my eyes welding. My father realized that I was desperate to go, so he hired an architecture professor who had retired – Dr. Tandy was his name – and we went abroad. He was one of those remarkable people who knew everything and were perfectly willing to share it. He talked all the time. To me it was monotonous, so that when we stopped I was tired. A funny thing: I realized that though I would always be interested in architecture, I was more interested in creating the setting for architecture. That's how I really got started.

Cite So you hadn't studied landscape architecture at the University of Texas?

PF No. At that time there were no classes in landscape architecture at the University of Texas. I had known Albert Sheppard – my partner from 1937 to 1942 – at the University of Texas. He was one year behind me in architecture. For some reason Albert seemed to take a fancy to me. I was a little older than he was; he was from Mexico and was born in Mexico City. He was working at the time I reencountered him for a Mrs. C. B. Whitehead. She was one of these landscape people, a typical



C.C. Fleming, east square garden, Smith Garden, 1946.

on the shutters and trim was very rich and very New Orleans. I had lunch with Ethel Bowles and met Robert Bowles; he was a banker from San Francisco. We laid out a garden plan that was never completed. Robert traveled around too much.

By then I had made quite a few acquaintances on those lectures. One person, Mr. Herbert Godwin, who had a very nice Georgian house over on San Jacinto, invited me to come and have lunch with them. The important thing about Herbert is that he knew Miss Ima Hogg – he knew all the older ladies. He arranged to have me come out to a luncheon at Miss Ima's.

It was really a cocktail party. They had a great pianist sitting at the far end of the terrace in the unbelievable heat, playing the Steinway, and two attractive little Negro maids with great big ostrich-feather fans waving in the air, trying to keep mosquitoes off him. Herbert said, "Fleming, you seem to be very curious about what is happening here." Well, I'd never met Miss Hogg before. All my life I'd known who she was. My father and her father were acquainted. Miss Ima walked over and asked me what I knew about mosquitoes. I said: "Miss Ima, mosquitoes, as you know, are fragile, mean little creatures; they cannot fly in the breeze. If you would find some way to put fans out here or create a draft, the mosquitoes wouldn't be so bad." She said, "How would we do it?" I said that I would cut a lot of the thicket down. The thicket grew up to and actually hung over the back terrace. She said, "I don't want to hear any more." Bishop Clinton Quin, standing close at hand, said: "Now, Ima, you must not be so abrupt. This young man is supposed to be brilliant. Some of the things he said may be good ideas." She turned back, looked at me, and said, "I will consider talking to you more." I left a little after that. A few weeks went by and Miss Ima phoned. She wanted to know if I cared to come and visit with her. I said: "I would love to come visit with you. In fact, I would like to see more of your house." "Well, I'll be happy to show you more of my house. I would also like to show you my 'thicket,' as you call it." We stood out on the terrace – the mosquitoes were not bad that day – and I said that if she were to clear out quite a large area, so that the breezes could pass over the property, she should have a much lessened concentration of mosquitoes.

We did not get the job to do it. She

hired the Lambert Landscape Company of Dallas to come out and cut the thicket. The Lambert people cut a 12-foot trench through the trees and thicket. That didn't do any good at all. While this was going on she went to Europe. Someone saw what was going on and phoned her and said, "Ima, the Lambert people are just wrecking your woods." So Ima cut them off. She didn't really give them a chance to explain what their plan was. When she came home, she phoned me and wanted to know if I would come over to see her. I said I would be delighted to. She said, "Well, since you started this wreckage, I want to see what you can do to improve it." So I suggested that we go down to the far end of that slit and look back up. It was a clear, lovely day. And for the first time I realized, and she did too, that her house was sitting on a series of descending

terraces – they were very irregular – and she agreed to cut out everything 12 inches or less. Some of those big trees were magnificent.

When I finished with Bayou Bend I was more or less popular, and I have been more or less busy ever since. But I discovered some things about Miss Hogg. If she got cross with me she could be real testy; she could also be extremely generous.

Cite When you came to Houston, were there any memorable gardens here?

PF Houston was settled and developed by people who had taste. Mrs. Cleveland Sewall, who built an enormous property on Inwood Drive in River Oaks, had exquisite taste. Now, the people who laid out Broadacres had a dispute with Mrs. Sewall, so she built out in River Oaks. She always had good gardens. There were three or four people: Huberta Garwood, who was married to old Judge [Hiram M.] Garwood, one of the founders of Baker, Botts, Parker & Garwood, who lived on Montrose. It was not an enormous garden, but it was a very nice garden, beautifully proportioned, beautifully laid out. I think

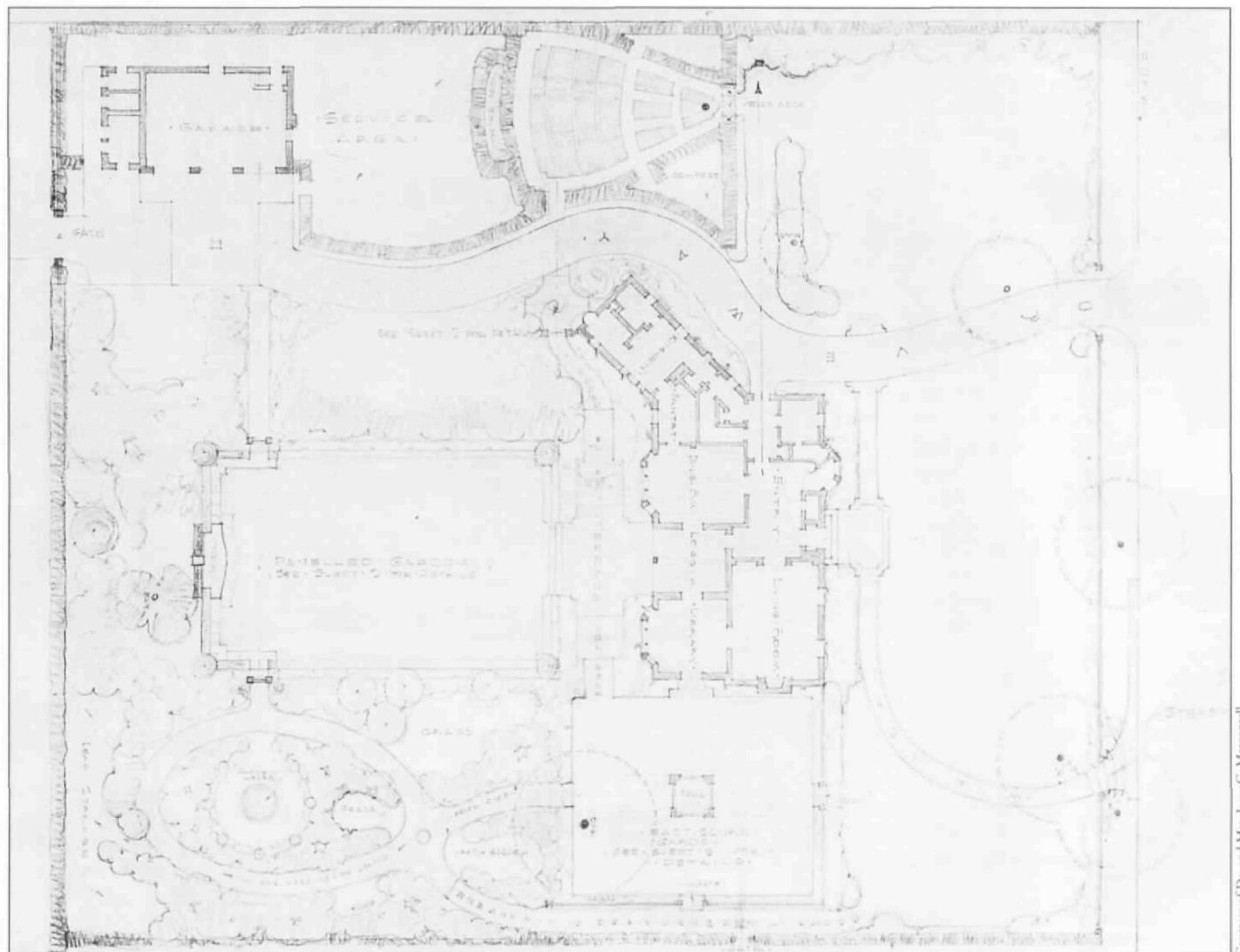
that it was laid out by Ellen Shipman of New York.

Cite Didn't Ellen Shipman do work for Mrs. Sewall?

PF Yes, and for Miss Ima, too. Ellen Shipman, I think, brought Miss Ruth London to Houston. Ruth London also worked with Miss Ima. Miss Shipman and I became friends. When I went back to Europe after my blind period, I carried a half dozen letters of introduction from Ellen Shipman. People loved that lady, they really did love her. I felt very fond of her, too.

Cite Did you do very much work outside of Houston?

PF Oh, yes, we had a branch office in Dallas. I married a Dallas girl. I used to do lots of work in San Antonio, and I did some work in Austin. In Austin, one of my first jobs was for Margaret and Herman Brown, of Brown & Root. Mr. Brown wasn't sure what he wanted to do; his wife wanted a rose garden. After I laid it out, he agreed that we would put it in, and he



C. C. Fleming, Smith Garden, 1946. Fleming's site plan for this small estate garden illustrates his practice of creating garden rooms of varying spatial character to complement interior vistas, site conditions, and functional requirements.



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Fleming Planning Consultants, south terrace, Schlumberger Garden, 1980.

sent a great big highway maintainer-grader to grade the rose garden. The beauty that was there on that particular piece of property was torn all to pieces. I don't think I ever forgave that man.

In San Antonio, one of the best gardens I did is now the McNay Art Museum. Mrs. McNay was an unusual person, very much advanced for her time. She bought many, many paintings. She bought many of them because she wanted to help the artists. She had one of the best collections of Picassos in America. She gave away paintings as others would give away playing cards. Like Van Gogh. I think the McNay has four of his paintings.

I also did landscape for the other big museum there, the Witte Museum. The George Parkers built a great house, and it had a very good landscape. We brought in the biggest trees that had been transplanted in Texas at that time. Most of those live oaks had trunks that were very big. You talk about labor – there were none of the present-day machines. You dug a trench around the tree. The Mexican workers channeled under it, then cabled it, chickenwired it, and burlapped it with double layers. They would bring a vast piece of equipment, like a crane, to lift it. I think we dug more dirt to get a tree out than we ever did to get a tree in.

Eight of those trees were transplanted for the University of Texas project in 1930. All the trees coming down the main mall are planted in solid limestone. We dug out holes 18 feet across, 15 feet deep. Each is connected by a trench so that the water can go under.

Cite When did you do your house in Kerrville?

PF Oh, that was in the seventies. It was well known.

Cite How do you decide whether to do a formal, axial garden or a more natural garden?

PF Once I meet the owners and we agree that we are going to work together, I visit their house and look out every window, studying what you see from that particular window or vista. Observing what they have in the

way of furniture, their paintings, I more or less formulate an approach outside that is harmonious with what I see inside. Very few of those properties are what I would call informal. I have done two or three properties that are almost totally informal because the houses were very simple.

Cite Let's try a specific example, the garden at Dogwoods, next to Bayou Bend.

PF It is more or less naturalistic.

Cite How did that design evolve?

PF That was done for Alice and Mike Hogg. Mike admired his sister Ima very much. One afternoon as we were sitting on that north terrace at Bayou Bend, now free from mosquitoes – he loved old-fashioned, and I do, too; I think on our second old-fashioned – he turned to me very abruptly and said: "I've decided to buy that house next door from Judge Proctor, and I want you to go over there and look it over, to design a garden. I don't know anything about houses; Ima does. I want something very naturalistic." A few days later I did go over. There was a very nice rose garden on the east side of that house. On the back side it was thicker; people weren't doing much about landscapes in those days. I wandered down into the bottom looking for the other side of the property and looked through the property line fence. There was the great house that John Staub had built for the Neals. I think the landscape architect that had laid it out was Olmsted.

Cite Yes, Olmsted Brothers.

PF I remember backing up to that picket fence and looking down into the valley and realizing that there were two little draws, and that it would be nice if a sparkle of water could be enjoyed in the draw. I knew Mike loved to play cards, so

I had the idea of creating a poker room down there in the woods. We only got up to the foundation level, now a terrace. But it was to have had a wing going off to the west. It was going to be a complete house in miniature. He was going to have the first picture window in Houston. We never got to finish the entire project because of Mr. Hogg's passing.

Going down toward the lower valleys are some very graceful slopes, but some of that is densely shaded. We removed all the brush and all the trees we could without ruining the native, overall effect, and planted monkey grass. I was dubbed the monkey grass king. All you have to do is give it a few weeks of growth and wash it with a hose and it's just a beautiful ground cover. A lot of that still exists. I have always been impressed with ground covers.

Cite Do you think that, had you been trained as a landscape architect, you might have approached design in a different manner?

PF I'm not sure that I would have. But the fact is that I was not interested in landscape until the traveling experience I had in Europe – realizing that it was the setting of the building rather than the building itself – that changed me from preferring architecture. ■



Fleming Planning Consultants, east terrace, Streetman Garden, 1966.

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