

In June, Santa Barbara-based landscape architect Lane Goodkind spoke to the SCHS about his philosophy of integrating the concept of wildness into designed landscapes. Citing his personal and professional background experiences as influences, he discussed the challenges and rewards inherent to recreating “wilderness” in an ornamental landscape, and how grasslands in particular play a role in this evolving concept.

Raised in the Sierra Nevada and the Torrey Pines Mesa, both areas with abundant natural beauty, Goodkind recalled early memories of landscapes giving way to urbanization, which raised in him the question of why some areas are saved and others change. This thought and the influence of reading Paul Shepard's *Man in the Landscape* led him to develop his central philosophy that seeking wilderness leads to spiritual redemption and can be achieved even in urban areas. He contends that psychological wilderness (i.e.: designed landscapes), directly impact how we perceive real nature and natural areas, and that we have effectually banished ourselves from nature within our cities.

Goodkind believes nature can exist everywhere it is able to gain a foothold, and “wilderness” can be constructed even in small urban areas. His primary objective is to create landscapes that are less contrived, but still functionally designed. Grasses are one of the tools he feels provide him with the creative freedom to achieve this balance. He cites grass guru John Greenlee as well as the Santa Rosa Plateau as significant influences on his own aesthetic. The latter is an ecological reserve in Riverside County where you are unaware that you are surrounded by civilization because all of the sight lines are so well controlled. Additionally, Goodkind worked for Murase Associates in Oregon on a conceptual project for the Grand Canyon, where he learned how to control water disbursement and apply this to urban landscape projects, while still keeping wilderness as a component.



During his talk, Goodkind shared images of various projects, including the creation and implementation of a master plan for the 100-year-old Cate School in Santa Barbara, completed in 2005. The existing storm water run-off drainage ditch was replaced with a dual-convergence system that keeps all captured water on site, where it is used for irrigation. Deferred landscape maintenance was also addressed, including the construction of an 800-foot long bioswale planted with native trees and riparian plants, which directs the flow of the water and improves its quality. Within a 10-year period, the aesthetic changes to the landscape often prompt people to inquire whether the grounds have “always been there?” due to their naturalistic appearance.



Other projects Goodkind shared include a wetland restoration involving vernal pools at a University of California, Santa Barbara site, the self-sustaining Malibu Lagoon which serves the public while protecting the environment, apartment complexes, renovation projects and various residential designs. It is in these residential projects especially that he seeks to blur the boundary between where the wilderness surrounding a property ends, and the more consciously manicured garden design begins.

Whether it is the conversion of an old avocado grove into a terraced garden filled with rocks, grasses and California native plants, or the top of a mesa planted with a meadow to complement the existing oak woodland, or a contemporary home that ensures all water stays on site to support the planted grasses and abundant wildlife, Goodkind strives to bring the wildness of nature back into every client's garden. He takes it as the greatest compliment when first-time visitors to one of his projects are unable to tell the man-made landscape from the natural, or when clients are reawakened to the natural world around them.

✪ Sabine Steinmetz

Photo credits: lanegoodkind.com

SCHS INTERN REPORT

In addition to the inspiring presentation by our invited speaker, the SCHS was pleased to welcome Alicia Peterson, recipient of one of SCHS's recent internship grants. She is currently studying Horticulture at Pierce College and recently completed a 10-week internship in the Nature Gardens of the Museum of Natural History Los Angeles County.

Alicia's involvement there included tracking the ever-changing annuals and their successive blooms in the Pollinator Garden, tending tomatoes, beans, strawberries and artichokes in the Edible Garden, and documenting the Foraging Project. She concluded by commenting that by having the garden directly adjacent to Exposition Boulevard, the Museum has created a welcome oasis amidst the surrounding urbanity.

Alicia expressed her appreciation to the SCHS and indicated that she has plans to participate in another internship program at the Theodore Payne Foundation in the near future.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Following the June meeting, we are pleased to announce the following new members to the SCHS Board.

Carol Aronson · Aprille Curtis · Steve Singer

Welcome! And thank you all for volunteering your time and talents to serve the organization.

SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES:

How do you use water as a feature in your garden?



The sound of water falling or bubbling is a soothing sound at a primal level to many of us. In my own tiny garden, I like to keep a birdbath going for my feathered friends. Birdbaths need to be shallow, so I put a tiny solar-run water pump in it. It creates just enough flow to attract the birds without wasting water.

- Anonymous