

## **Stylistic Development and Cultural Context: Gardens 2019 Garden Docent Training Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens**

The visual characteristics of the gardens and landscape architecture of the styles that are influencers on Hillwood's gardens are described in generalized terms below. The cultural factors that influenced the visual characteristics, again generalized, are also designated.

### **Moorish**

- Rectilinear courtyards with quiet water features
- Divided into four quadrants by four streams of water (representing the waters of life) that converge into a central pool
- Seen as a heavenly paradise represented on earth

### **Italian**

- Emphasis on architecture and formal design over the plant material
- Fanciful grottoes and statuary that recall Classical mythology through subject matter and the patina of antiquity
- More stable political situations allows for gardens to begin to break out beyond their Medieval walls in the development of country villas for the ruling elite
- Renaissance elite were looking back to gardens of antiquity

### **French**

- Design based on symmetry and geometry—more focus on structure rather than color
- Architectural features highlighted—plants are pruned to mirror architecture
- Creation of vistas and false perspectives using alleés (long rows of manicured trees)
- Tight formality of gardens was a reflection of the king's absolute authority, national identity, and man's control over nature

### **English**

- More informal and park-like—praising a "picturesque" nature found in 17<sup>th</sup> century landscape painting
- Plants take prominence over architectural features—more variety in the plant material, especially flowering plants
- Designed to look as if nature is taking over—irregular planting and pruning
- Use of the "ha-ha," or dry ditch, to divide estate properties without interfering with the landscape vistas

### **Asian**

- The placement of each garden element affects the spirit or energy of the garden as a whole
- Large landscapes (such as mountains) depicted in miniature
- Plants and trees pruned for special effects—catching snow or appearing older/larger than they are
- Landscape is designed with spiritual reflection, ritual, and beliefs in mind