



# Sister Arts: The Erotics of Lesbian Landscapes

*Lisa L. Moore*

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In the great age of English garden design, eighteenth-century women working in the “sister arts” of painting, poetry, and landscape gardening adapted the Linnaean system of plant classification and the tradition of the erotic garden to create art with and for other women that celebrated everything from classical friendship to erotic love. In this book, filled with lush illustrations and intriguing stories, Lisa L. Moore reveals how these women artists used flowers, gardens, and landscapes to express their love for other women.

Aristocratic diarist Mary Delany built a garden grotto for the exclusive use of herself and the naturalist and collector Margaret Bentinck, Duchess of Portland. Romantic poet Anna Seward, mourning the loss of Honora Sneyd to an unworthy marriage and then death, wrote her beloved’s face and body into her landscape poems. And in 1790s Connecticut, feminist intellectual Sarah Pierce transformed texts and images into a new poetic evocation of intimacy between women both egalitarian and erotic. These women, Moore shows, influenced later works by Emily Dickinson, Georgia O’Keeffe, Frida Kahlo, and Tee Corinne.

Moore goes on to trace the legacy of the lesbian sister arts tradition in subsequent art and poetry, including contemporary multimedia work by Kara Walker, Michelene Thomas, Alma Lopez, and Allyson Mitchell. Her book redefines this unstudied sister arts tradition, which becomes visible only when we understand how the works of these women exemplify what she deems “lesbian genres.” It will captivate readers who want to know more about women’s contributions to garden history and landscape design—as well as those looking for a new perspective on queer history, literature, and culture.

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