

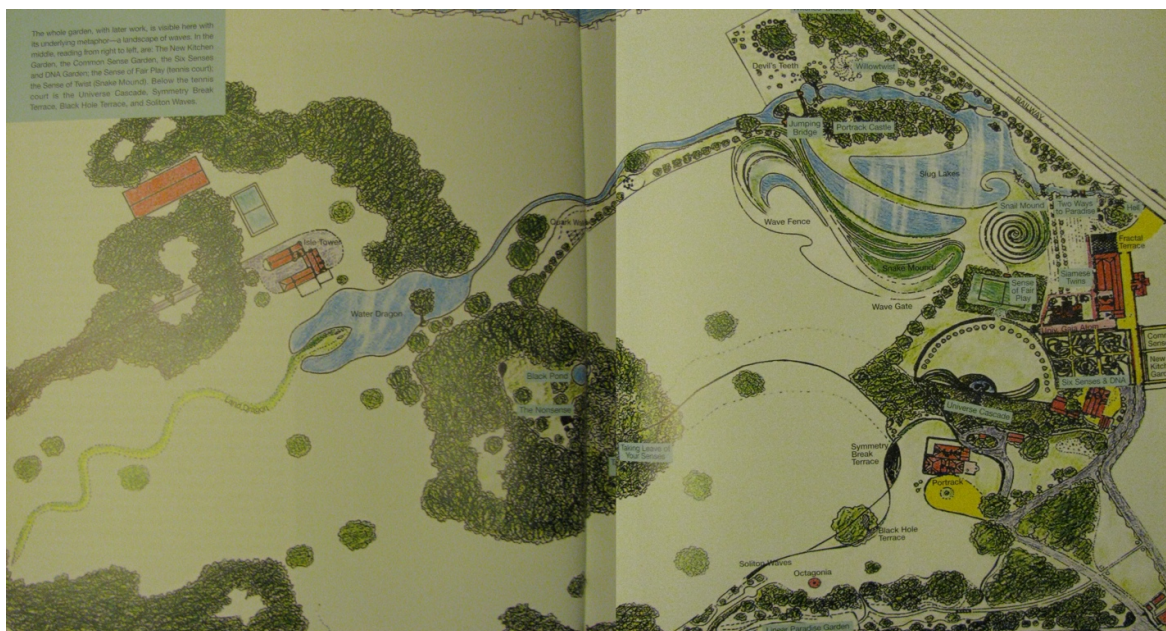
THE GARDEN OF COSMIC SPECULATION



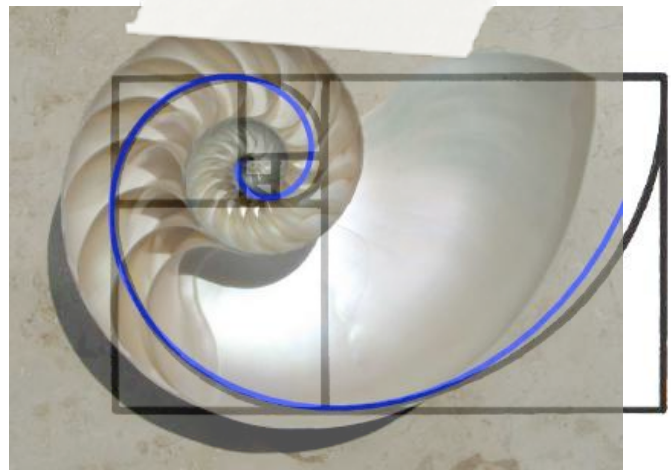
Created in 1981 by Charles Jencks and his now deceased wife, Maggie Keswick, the Garden of Cosmic Speculation was designed as a modern art piece that makes the entrant feel infinitesimal at times, and grand at others. It is a work that manifests modern achievements in thought and science through fractal geometry and fibonacci spirals. Jencks was attempting to provoke questions about our place in this universe, and how the modern man views himself in relation to the whole of the cosmos. Jencks said of his garden,

"My Goal... is to celebrate nature and our delight in it. Today, After a century of extraordinary discoveries in biology, such as evolution and the role of DNA, and cosmology, the birth if not origin of the universe, this means there are new subjects for garden art and a new view of nature that might be presented."

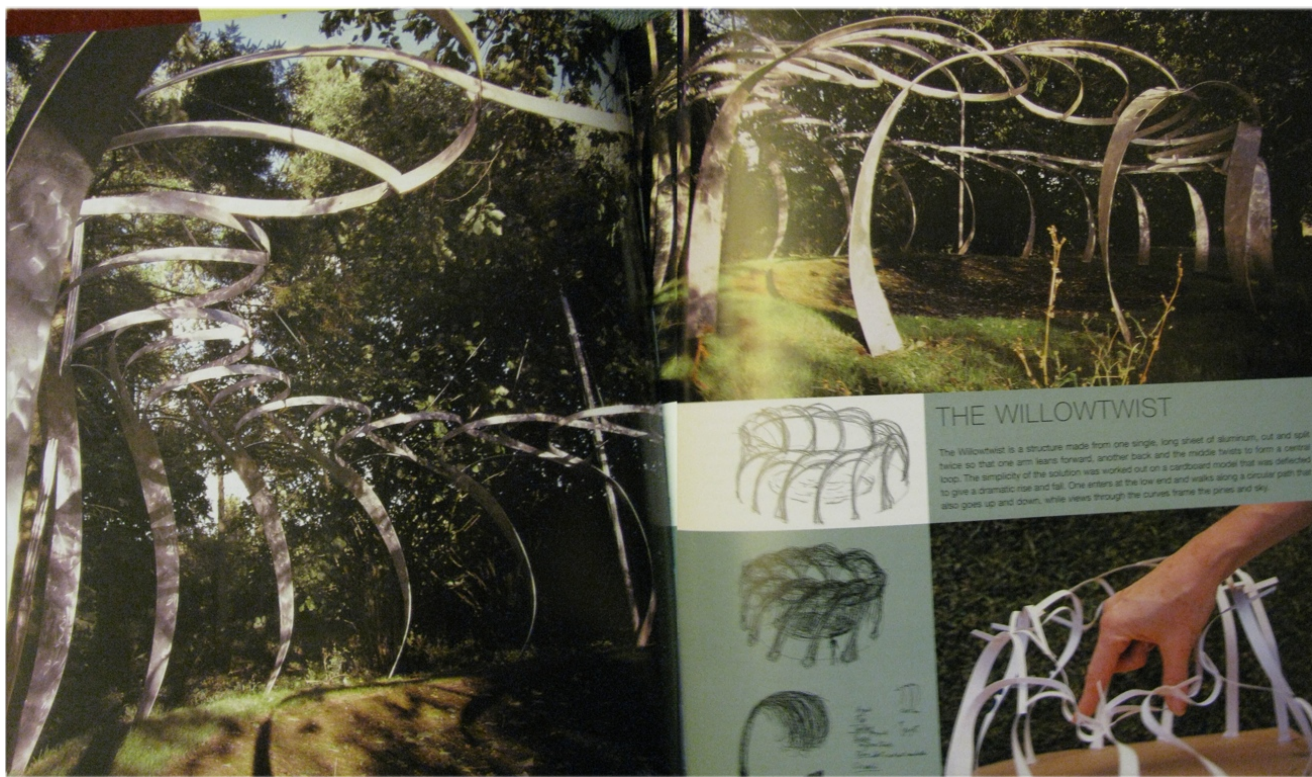
Located on a 30 acre lot in Portrack, Scotland, the garden incorporates several areas that each provide some food for thought (from left to right): The New Kitchen Garden, Common Sense Garden, Six Senses Garden, DNA Garden, Sense of Fair Play (tennis court), Sense of Twist (Snake Mound), Universe Cascade, Symmetry Break Terrace, Black Hole Terrace, and the Soliton Waves.



The garden as a whole does not have any clear organizing geometry, which is reflective of chaos theory, but within the individual parts there is often the famous Fibonacci spiral (which has to do with the golden ratio), fractal geometry, and other naturally occurring patterns.



The garden contains several interesting pieces. One such work is called The Willowtwist. The willowtwist was originally constructed out paper so that the logistics of the work could be ascertained. It is constructed as one continuous piece of aluminum that wraps around in a circular motion. Much could be pondered from this work, such as the Law of Conservation of Energy, or the way that a genetic pattern will produce such beauty in trees. Also, the fact that this is a man-made object, but yet made out a naturally occurring substance makes one wonder our relationship to nature, and our attempt to imitate it through the very profession of landscape architecture.



Another work thinks about the modern achievements of genetics, and the discovery of the beautiful shape of the double helix, the programming language to life. He creates one model which reflects the genetic base of all things, while another double helix unraveling shows how genes are replicated and copied. Jencks then goes a step further, and thinks about language as cultural DNA. Using letters and images he spells out "You See Before U unlock the wheel of time a great chain of rings... R U open 2 see fantastic links or do U call a spade a spade... Great power chains one 2 excess so wrench open yr mind's eye and jump...see file record a date 2000"



A final work is the center piece, and somewhat of the crowning achievement of the garden. Titled "The Jumping Universe" this piece reflects of the history of the universe and marks major milestones. It begins as a single set of stairs, much in the way the universe is thought to have begun from super compacted matter. Then the stairs go right and left, at each point marking some major, although somewhat arbitrary, milestone. Such points include: superstrings, inflation, light, matter, first stars, solar system, moon stabilizes earth, DNA, symbiosis, life, sex, civilization, and consciousness.



All this information was obtained from Charles Jenkin Book, "The Garden of Cosmic Speculation", which he dedicated to his now deceased wife.

The Garden of Cosmic Speculation by Charles Jenkins, Frances Lincoln Ltd., London 2003

