

November 25, 2019

Alexander Reford  
Director  
International Garden Festival  
Reford Gardens

RE: Jardin de Métis 21<sup>st</sup> Edition International Garden Festival

Dear Mr. Reford,

As an interdisciplinary designer focused on the relationship of climate, infrastructure, and community, the theme of the 21<sup>st</sup> Edition International Garden Festival was particularly meaningful to me. Over the last 25 years I have pursued a purposeful and personal trajectory toward leadership in theory and professional practice in resilient design. While my professional practice was largely formed in my adulthood, its inspiration and evolution can be traced back to my childhood in eastern Vermont. Time spent alone walking in the woods, exploring the hydraulics of stream beds with primitive dams, and marveling at the aurora borealis with my geophysicist father and his scientist friends left an indelible imprint on my thinking about the natural environment. Combined interest in art, science, agriculture, water, history, and innovation has shaped my career as a designer, inventor, and academic.

The proposed title of my garden for the 21<sup>st</sup> Edition Festival is 'Reflective Encounters'. The name has many layers that relate to the theme *Métissages*. Through a didactic approach, two paths – one black and one white - wind across the site, meeting and weaving together. One path is paved with light colored high albedo material that reflects sunlight keeping the surrounding area cool. A second path made of dark pavement will create a hot environment. The paths have the same material qualities but are simply different colors. Their difference and intertwining are a metaphor for global migration of different peoples related to resource scarcity.

Thermodynamics was the starting point of my project and evolved into something more nuanced. I wanted to make a garden that expressed the dangers of heat island effects related to global climate change. In the United States alone there are enough black asphalt parking lots that when combined equal the size of the State of Georgia. The overall planting plan reflects a global heat map of the world. Lush green areas line the longitudinal edges of the garden. An intermediate area of xeriscape plantings transition into a sandy center reflective of arid regions. Walking through the green zones will feel cooler on hot days from plant evapotranspiration and because paths will be shaded. I chose to keep the expression of the globe abstract in the garden, to call attention to larger cultural and scientific themes.

The layout is modular and will be simple to construct. If selected, I will work with the garden to develop a planting and paving plan that maximizes the potential for reuse of materials. My submission is a personal expression of something I believe needs to be expressed to the world.

Sincerely,



Susannah C. Drake FASLA, AIA  
Founding Principal Dlandstudio  
Associate Professor University of Colorado Boulder