

IN THE COUNTRY

The Modern Garden

Grow With the Flow

Gustafson's boxwood-lined, shingled Water Stairs at Les Jardins de l'Imaginaire, in France.

Most landscape architecture of the 20th century is rooted in the traditions of the English garden, where man first tamed nature and then imposed his planting schemes on it. But the gardens of KATHRYN GUSTAFSON—one of the most admired landscape designers working today, with offices in London and Seattle—are created

well outside that tradition. "I try to make architecture and landscape fit together as a solid piece and take on only clients who want to make a work of art, not create or adapt a planting scheme," she says. After studying fashion in New York City, Gustafson, then in her twenties, moved to Paris and, she says, "just happened to >72

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Gardener extraordinaire: Kathryn Gustafson.

fall in love with landscape design." Today her portfolio includes huge projects such as the Lurie Garden, part of Chicago's Millennium Park; the somewhat controversial Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain, in London; and the beautiful Jardins de l'Imaginaire, in the Périgord region of France. She considers André Le Nôtre, who designed the gardens of Versailles, as one of her two greatest influences. The other is the sculptor Isamu Noguchi, and the curved and arching forms she carves out of the landscape are indeed sculptural. But labels don't particularly interest Gustafson. "I think you just go about your work and do what you do," she says. These days she's doing quite a lot: with the partners in her Seattle office, she is installing a garden in the new Norman Foster-designed courtyard at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, in Washington, D.C., and she's also working on the landscapes surrounding the addition to the Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston, another Foster project. Want her to make over your own backyard? Good luck—with a specialty in large-scale public and corporate projects, she's accepting only a handful of private commissions. As consolation, pick up last year's *Moving Horizons: The Landscape Architecture of Kathryn Gustafson and Partners* (Birkhäuser; \$88). JANE GARMEY

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