



The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society, April 1, 1998 by Lucy R. Lippard, 275.

CLIFF GARTEN (project director), et al., *Saint Paul Cultural Garden*, 1991-95. This unique collaboration between visual artists and poets, conceived and coordinated by sculptor Cliff Garten, is a six-“room” park on a reclaimed urban promontory over the Mississippi in St. Paul, Minnesota. Developed from often heated dialogues among the participants, it is intellectually and politically provocative about the situation of difference in a multicultural city, as well as being beautifully designed. The scattered overall plan and each sculptural ensemble were designed by Garten with details in two of them by Ta-coumba T. Aiken (a mosaic) and Armando Gutierrez G. (*nicho* tracery). The poets whose short commissioned pieces provided the garden’s connecting threads were Sandra Benitez, Soyini Guyton, Roberta Hill-Whiteman, John Minczeski, David Mura, and Xeng Sue Yang. Their words evoke water, frost and fire, the river remembering its ancient name, the river forgetting us, the river harboring sorrows too deep to surrender, the river as a border that binds rather than separates. As David Mura wrote later, this is an “American garden... and it says, I think, that we can heal the wounds of history if only we learn from them.... It says there must be a place for all of us here, not just for some.... It offers a way for us to think about what America was, what it is, and what it can be....”

