

All Around is Fairy Ground: Repton & the Regency Garden

Humphry Repton (1752 – 1818) ambitiously named himself Capability Brown's successor: the century's next great improver of landed property. Developing a new aesthetic, which he termed 'Ornamental Gardening', his Regency layouts were laced with flowers and crammed with frothy features.

Immortalized in Jane Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*, Repton's famous Red Books – illustrated to help his clients visualize the pleasurable potential of their properties – did much to encourage an appreciation of landscape aesthetics amongst the rising middle classes. This lecture traces his designs from their Picturesque beginnings to the progressive Gardenesque style.

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Dr. Laura Mayer is an independent lecturer and researcher. She holds an MA in Garden History and a PhD on eighteenth-century landscape design. Laura has published extensively, including on Capability Brown, and Jane Austen's contemporary, Humphry Repton. She shares Elizabeth Bennett's appreciation for the picturesque as well as her talent for tramping about a garden inappropriately shod. She has also been known to pen the odd limerick about Fitzwilliam Darcy.