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Mentor's Introduction

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Virginia Fitzpatrick has returned to graduate study with varied interests and a rich background of experience and concerns. As a printmaker, she has an enviable record of exhibition and recognition; as a teacher, she is concerned with adult education and an expansive view of art content and its importance.

In the essay "Artist of the Environment: Frederick Law Olmsted," Ms. Fitzpatrick calls attention to landscape architecture as an art form and points out that the results of it, at least in public parks, are easily accessible to all the people. She also points out that this art form can be traced specifically to the work of Frederick Law Olmsted. As he worked throughout the country, Olmsted created the basic tenets and standards that define the discipline of landscape architecture.

Ms. Fitzpatrick takes us one step further and asks us to use landscaped public places as examples we can examine, with students, of art history, aesthetics, and for their sensory properties molded into a unity. Our literature barely mentions and rarely illustrates what she claims is an easily accessible resource; this reflects her broad and open conception of the arts and is an important contribution to our field.

It is stimulating to be the mentor of students such as Virginia Fitzpatrick when they challenge our background and broaden our vision. Many of her prints are miniatures, measuring less than one or two inches in either dimension. In contrast, her vision of what art education can or should be about is global and expansive; she asks us all to see the environments about us as the works of discoverers and artists.