

Cosmic American Gardens

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The following pages offer some wonderful expressions of human relationships to the land. These gardens are idiosyncratic and certainly not within mainstream design theory. Yet their power is indisputable.

These gardens are intensely personal but transcendent, pointing to a reality beyond what is perceptible to our senses. They are low carbon and low energy, and most are pure expressions of their bioregion. There are many lessons for us as we move into the zero fossil fuels era.

In compiling these, I was influenced by Gram Parsons and his idea of a "new way forward, a way to musically heal the separation and increasing divisiveness of late modern life. His term for what he attempted was Cosmic American music." "<http://nodepression.com/article/what-cosmic-american-music-and-list-examples>

Can we find a "new way forward" through Cosmic American gardens? Can our entry into the zero carbon era be eased by gardens that are synthesis of human expression and bioregional materials? If so, these new gardens will belong the Anthropocene.

I don't offer commentary on these. Explore for yourself.



Howard Finster, Paradise Garden

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Philadelphia's Magic Gardens

<https://www.phillymagicgardens.org>

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"Anyone can do anything with a million dollars – look at Disney. But it takes more than money to make something out of nothing, and look at the fun I have doing it." Tressa "Grandma" Prisbrey



Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village, California

<http://www.bottlevillage.com>

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Edward Leedskalnin: Coral Castle, FL

<https://coralcastle.com>

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Kenny Hill Sculpture Garden: Chauvin, Louisiana

<https://www.nicholls.edu/folkartcenter/park.html>

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Kenny Hill Sculpture Garden: Chauvin, Louisiana <https://www.nicholls.edu/folkartcenter/park.html>

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The Mindfield by Billy Trip: Brownsville, Tenn

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/billy-tripps-mindfield>

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Samuel Perry Dinsmoor Garden of Eden, Kansas

<http://www.garden-of-eden-lucas-kansas.com>

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Howard Finster Paradise Garden, GA

<http://paradisegardenfoundation.org>

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<https://www.richelleputnam.net/travels.html>

REM emerged in Georgia near Finster's garden. Several of their music videos were recorded within it. In 1984, Michael Stipe worked with Howard Finster to create the *Reckoning* album cover. Stipe was inspired by the patterns in Finster's garden. Finster created the painting.

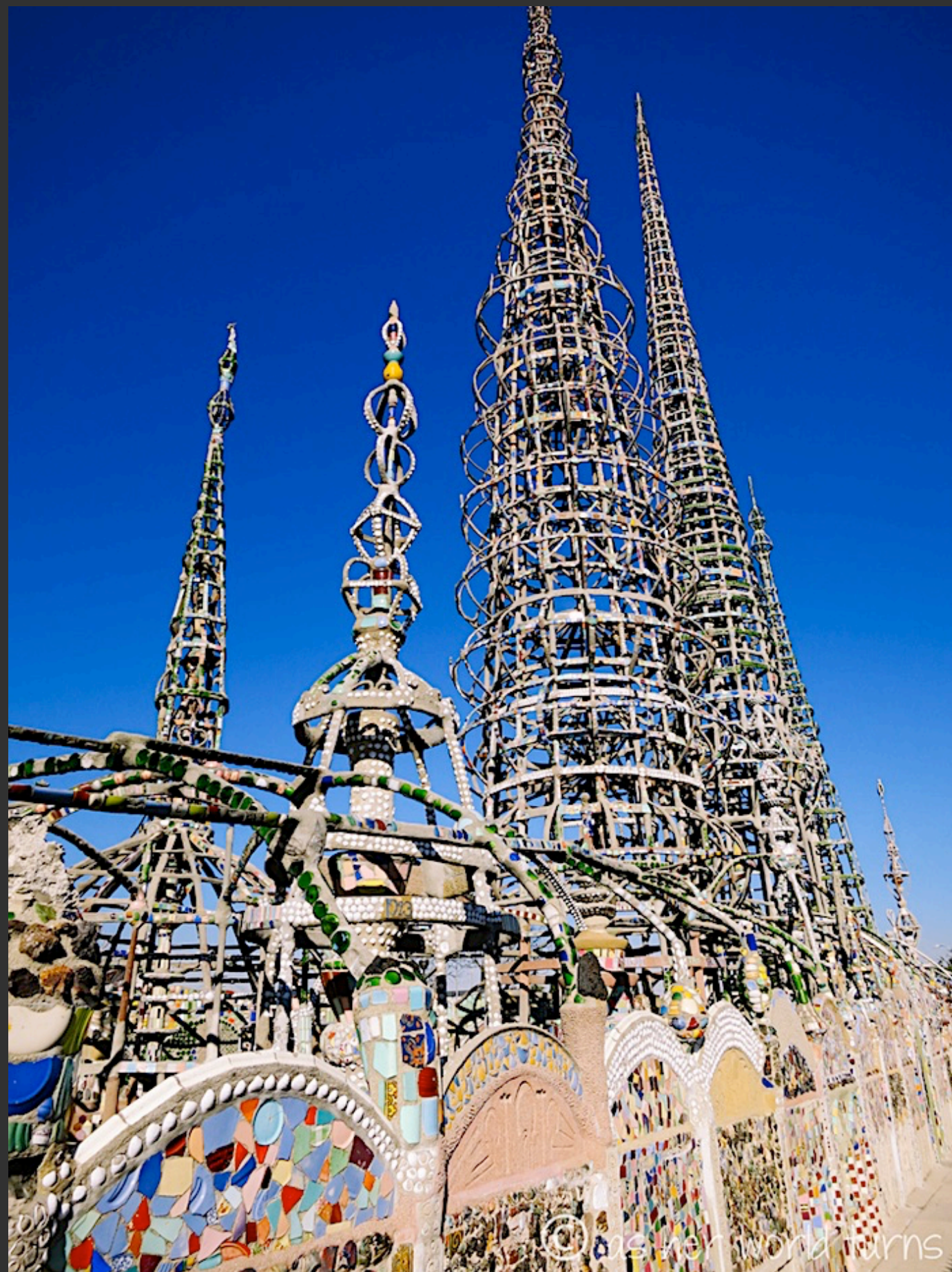


Howard Finster Paradise Garden, GA

<http://paradisegardenfoundation.org>

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Sabato "Simon" Rodia, Watts Towers, Calif.

<http://www.wattstowers.us>

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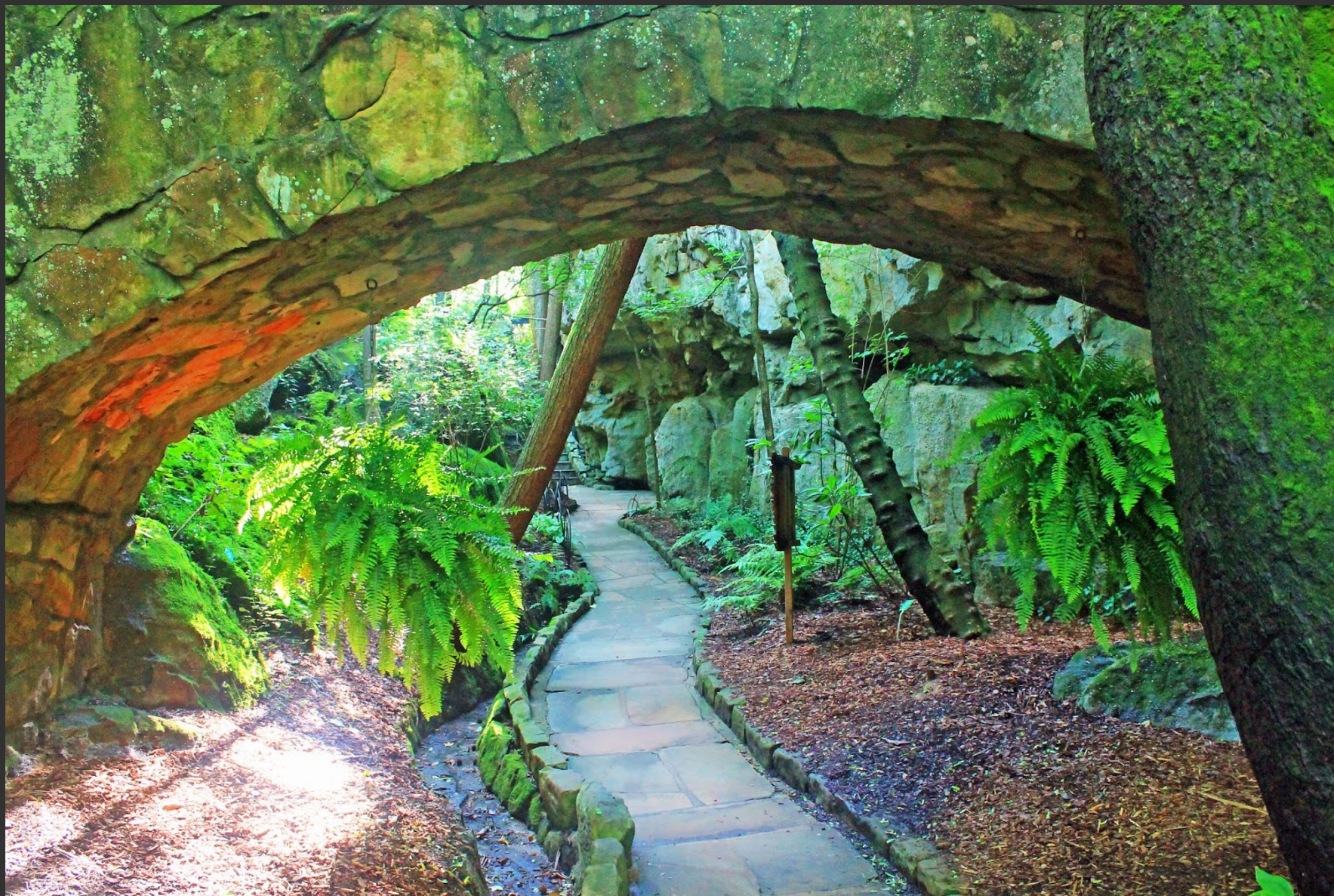


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Fairy Land Gardens, Rock City, Tenn

<http://www.travelquest-ny.com/2013/08/rock-city-gardens.html>

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"Places for the Spirit: Traditional African American Gardens."

<http://1world1family.me/chicagos-african-american-folk-gardens/>

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Dr. Evermor's Forevertron, Sumpter, WI

<http://worldofdrevermor.com>

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Unknown, Boise, ID

<http://www.wglandscape.com/xericoasis/>

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While obviously not an outsider garden, I consider this room in Bloedel to be related to the previous ones. It appears intensely personal and transcendent, suggesting a reality beyond what is perceptible to my senses. This is more refined than the others, but is more energy intensive and ecologically disruptive.

Richard Haig: Bloedel Reserve, Bainbridge Island, WA

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It would be an oversight to not include Parc Guell as one of the grandfathers of these Cosmic American Gardens. And this is a great reminder of the vital importance of learning the craft of construction.



Antonio Gaudi: Parc Guell, Barcelona