

The Lost Landscapes of Ian Hamilton Finlay

Audio guide

**HENRY MOORE
INSTITUTE**

This is the audio version of the wall text, *The Lost Landscapes of Ian Hamilton Finlay*.

This display of the New Arcadian Press publications marks the centenary of the birth of Scottish poet and artist Ian Hamilton Finlay, 1925 to 2006.

I am the editor and publisher of the press, Dr Patrick Eyres, and I first met Finlay in 1979.

By publishing unrealised proposals, I have compiled a printed archive of these lost landscapes.

Ian Hamilton Finlay realised over 80 commissions for landscape installations across Europe, the USA and the UK.

Describing his works as pastoral, he championed neoclassicism in contemporary art.

As a poet, he chose to collaborate with selected art makers to create printed and sculptural works for gallery exhibitions and landscape installations.

At the heart of his creative practice was the garden he developed with Sue Finlay from 1966 at Little Sparta, their home in the Pentland Hills of southern Scotland.

The garden continues to attract visitors from around the world and was included in the New York Times listing of the 25 gardens you must see in May 2025.

Since 1981, I have created 56 editions of the New Arcadian Journal.

It brings together artists and writers to explore designed landscapes, especially their architecture, gardens, monuments, sculpture and inscriptions.

Each edition is a treasury of drawing and thought-provoking text.

By championing the study of political gardening and by promoting restoration of place and meaning,

the journal has shed new light on historical landscapes and has also been the catalyst to contemporary reinterpretation and conservation.

The New Arcadian Journal has inadvertently become the only record of certain gardens that failed to survive the death of the artists who created them.

The current edition of the New Arcadian Journal is *Virtuous Landscapes*, which features proposals for Ian Hamilton Finlay's two lost Parisian landscapes of 1986 to 1988.

You can browse the complete set of the journal in Henry Moore Institute's research library.

Now for a brief description of the display.

In the reception display case, there are double page extracts from an early proposal.

In the centre of the wall vitrine is the journal that includes the catalogue of Finlay's 80 realised landscape installations.

On either side are double page spreads of three proposals.

On the wall are the covers of three journals framed by their fly leaves.

The illustration on the green cover shows a rowing boat at the point of landfall beside the cottage and garden of the artist Derek Jarman at Dungeness.

The large wall vitrine contains recent journals with proof pages showing extracts from four proposals including the two for Paris in the late 1980s.

This is a transcript of an audio guide produced by Henry Moore Institute for the library display *The Lost Landscapes of Ian Hamilton Finlay*, on display from 28 November 2025 to 19 April 2026. For more information visit henry-moore.org/whats-on/the-lost-landscapes-of-ian-hamilton-finlay/