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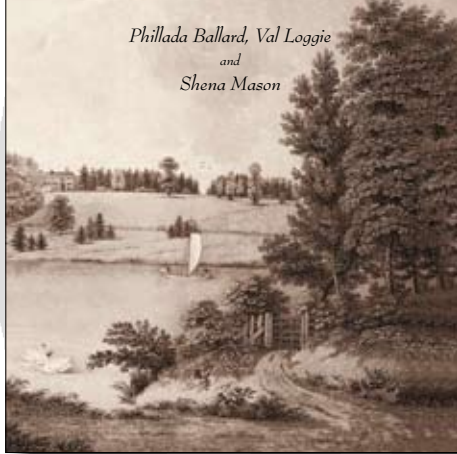
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## A LOST LANDSCAPE *Matthew Boulton's Gardens at Soho*

*Phillada Ballard, Val Loggie and Shena Mason*

### A LOST LANDSCAPE *Matthew Boulton's Gardens at Soho*

*Phillada Ballard, Val Loggie  
and  
Shena Mason*



MATTHEW BOULTON (1728-1809) was one of the leading figures of the early Industrial Revolution. He was responsible, with his business partner, the engineer James Watt, for developing new applications for steam power and supplying steam engines for industrial processes throughout Britain and Europe, and as far afield as Australia and the Americas. His Soho Manufactory in Handsworth, on the outskirts of Birmingham, where jewellery, silverware, ormolu, coins and medals were produced, attracted flocks of early industrial tourists, who came to gaze at its machines and the hundreds of employees at work – and then took tea in the tea-room alongside the aviary.

Boulton's interests ranged far and wide over the natural sciences and the arts. The new fashion for landscape gardening particularly appealed to his imagination and from the 1760s, when he and his wife went to live at Soho House, he set about creating his own landscape with woodland, lawns, colourful flower beds and borders, water features, garden buildings and walks.

After his death his son, Matthew Robinson Boulton, continued to develop the garden. Not initially knowledgeable about horticulture, he became more engaged with the subject and his notebooks contain much of interest to historians and to growers of early varieties of many fruits and vegetables. Following his death, Joseph Chamberlain attempted to turn Soho's gardens into a public park, but the idea was

rejected in favour of building leases, and bit by bit Matthew Boulton's landscaped park was replaced, first with upmarket villas and later with terraced housing, a railway coal yard and workshops and other premises, as Birmingham's industrial heartland spread outwards. In the 1990s Soho House and the remaining small garden were restored and developed as museum. This, the first history of the garden, throws surprising light on a lost and intriguing aspect of the city's heritage. A number of drawings and watercolours made by John Phillip in the 1790s are included and provide the only surviving contemporary visual evidence for how the garden once looked.

*A Lost Landscape: Matthew Boulton's Gardens at Soho* is produced to a high standard in paperback with 51 black and white illustrations in 112 pages, with an 8-page full-colour section.

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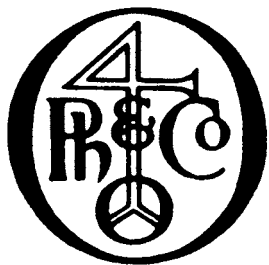
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# AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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Dr Phillada Ballard is a garden historian whose other books include a history of the University of Birmingham Botanic Gardens at Winterbourne, and *An Oasis of Delight*, a history of Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Her forthcoming publications include the History of the Culham Court Estate in Berkshire, and *Birmingham's Victorian Architects*, which she is editing for the Birmingham Branch of the Victorian Society. She is Historic Gardens Advisor for Soho House Museum, and is also acting as Consultant for the historic refurbishment of the town garden of Georgian House Museum in Bristol.

Val Loggie, MA, is the former curator of Soho House Museum and has worked at a number of museums around the Midlands. She is currently researching Works on Paper related to Matthew Boulton, which includes the work of John Phillip. This is an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded collaborative PhD co-supervised by the University of Birmingham and Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery. Contributor to Mason (ed.), *Matthew Boulton: Selling What all the World Desires* (Yale, 2009), the book which accompanies Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's Matthew Boulton bicentenary exhibition; and also Dick (ed.), *Matthew Boulton, a Revolutionary Player* (Birmingham, 2009).

Shena Mason, BA, worked on the Soho House Museum development project in the 1990s. She is the author of several Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery guidebooks, including that for Soho House, as well as *Jewellery Making in Birmingham, 1759-1995* (Phillimore, 1998) and *The Hardware Man's Daughter: Matthew Boulton and his 'Dear Girl'* (Phillimore, 2005). Editor of *Matthew Boulton: Selling What all the World Desires* (Yale, 2009), the book which accompanies Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's Matthew Boulton bicentenary exhibition; and contributor to Dick, Malcolm (ed.), *Matthew Boulton, a Revolutionary Player* (Birmingham, 2009).

The Authors are available for interviews and events. For any further details, or to request a review copy or interview, please contact Sarah Pavey on [sarah.pavey@phillimore.co.uk](mailto:sarah.pavey@phillimore.co.uk) or call (01243) 787636.

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