

## SCHELLEBELLE



Unknown artist (Flemish), *Project for a Landscape Garden near Schellebelle*, 18th century. Ink, watercolor and black pencil on paper. 18 x 20 1/2 inches.

Schellebelle is a village near Ghent, Belgium on the banks of the river Scheldt. The village grew out of a settlement on the Scheldt that emerged in the the Gallo-Roman period. Schellebelle has a unique trapezoidal central green likely created during the Middle Ages when a road was built across the center of the village green, dissecting it into two triangles. Like much of Flanders, the low elevation of Schellebelle determines the possibilities and potentials for landscape and urban development. As such, precise engineering for the lock and canal systems necessitated intricate designs for landscape development.

This drawing features a detailed landscape design in ink, watercolor and black pencil. Several plots are labeled “*landt van den pagter*” (land from the covenant) and “*potasie hof (sic)*” (potential court, or, kitchen garden). The garden design is depicted from multiple perspectives, offering both birds-eye views of the land acreage and its garden allotments, as well as moments of Cartesian perspectivalism: the verdant watercolor depiction of individual trees, buildings, vegetation and fencing are rendered along Cartesian axes with varying vanishing points. Such perspectivalism likely enabled its designer to establish both a mathematical and geographical accuracy while allowing for an aesthetic understanding of the ideal garden design.

Caroline Webb, 2019