

of separation that is essential to all good gardens.

These contrasts, between building and garden, garden room and open landscape, enclosure and entrance, have given rise to the most beautiful and innovative design work so far this century. The revival of the oldest garden type, the *hortus conclusus*, has produced dazzling strategies for containing a space while allowing it to communicate with its surrounds—slotted stone walls, grids of girders, files of rectangular hedges, stilt-trunked palisades. Christopher Bradley-Hole, the designer who began this revival, is also creating new forms even more monumental than triumphal arches—a sunken stone amphitheatre with a square aperture cut into one end giving onto a vista of fields; an arc of wall placed in a driveway so that one's vision is split between parkland on the one hand and distant hills on the other. Framing the familiar to make it seem far away, and vice versa, these are all Modernist explorations of the ancient mystery of gateways visual and physical, of exits and entrances.

But there is much to be said for the gate in its starkest form. In one great Oxfordshire garden, a border famed for its painterly sophistication ends

Will Pryce/CLPL; Vol Corbett/CLPL; Paul Barker/CLPL; Paul Higham/CLPL

Right
'Maintaining the degree of separation': the threshold of the recently made Collector Earl's Garden at Arundel Castle is boldly announced by a classically inspired arch. Below Wrought-iron perfection: painted and gilded garden gates interrupt the hedge, but are given weight by the inclusion of a statue on each side



Right The lych gate is an ecclesiastical structure of ancient origin. Its roofed construction spans one, or often two, plain gates—in this case at the end of the church lane at Littlebrey, Dorset



Statement symmetry: a whitewashed stone classical arch by Craig Hamilton dignifies this converted barn