



Award of
MERIT

Longwood Gardens Renovation

Kennett Square, PA

L'Observatoire International

Hervé Descottes, Jason Neches, and Natalia Priwin



"I like to keep the mystery of the night. The night belongs to something magical. You need something at night you don't have during the day. It's in our bodies; it's physiological."

—Hervé Descottes

Longwood Gardens is one of the premier horticultural display gardens in the United States, comprising 1077 acres of gardens, woodlands, and meadows. The Main Fountain Garden combines classical landscape design with music, art, innovation, technology, and spectacular fountains. The architects designed a major rehabilitation for the 80 year-old complex, including restoration; mechanical, electrical, and plumbing upgrades; and entirely new features and enhancements. L'Observatoire's lighting concepts for the restoration and redesign subtly enhance and shape the visitor experience by concealing light fixtures and using small LED sources wherever possible.

The lighting enhances the garden architecture and dynamic fountains at night, leading the eye toward the spectacle of the grand fountains. Strategic spotlighting renders garden features without drawing attention to itself. Visitors marvel at the fantastical garden elements without explicitly noticing the light source.

The Main Fountain Garden is experienced from multiple vantage points. The varied lighting scheme gives an overview of the fountain garden as grand tableau, while simultaneously creating intimate spaces within the garden to reveal pathways, lawns, and fountain areas up close. The control system ties the garden to natural cycles, lunar and seasonal, so the lighting evolves in parallel with the seasons, offering a rich experience for visitors.

ARCHITECT
Beyer Blinder Belle

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
West 8

WATER FEATURE DESIGN
AND ENGINEERING
Fluidity Design Consultants

OWNER
Longwood Gardens

PHOTOGRAPHY
Daniel Traub
FreshFly