This exhibit explores Asian gardens in 1926 and 1927 through the eyes of Elizabeth K. Roys, a botany student whose written descriptions, hand-drawn plans, and striking photography capture the landscapes of a vanished era.

Produced by the Botanic Garden of Smith College.
Asian Gardens of the 1920s: The Travels of Elizabeth K. Roys is a unique traveling exhibition produced by the Botanic Garden of Smith College in collaboration with landscape historian Betsy Anderson.

As a student of botany at Smith College, Elizabeth Roys toured Asia with her mother in 1926–27, exploring gardens in China, Japan, Korea, Siam (now Thailand), and India. She compiled detailed records and observations in five notebooks, which she kept all her life, and which were not discovered until 2002. Now, eighty years since Elizabeth Roys embarked on her remarkable Asian journey, these well-kept treasures are coming into public view through the efforts of Betsy Anderson, currently the Garden Historian at The Mount (Edith Wharton’s Estate and Gardens in Lenox, Massachusetts). Stunning photographs transport the visitor to the gardens Elizabeth Roys chronicled, many of which exist today only in her notebooks. The exhibition highlights temple, palace, private, working-class, and ruined gardens in all five countries and explores their differing cultural conceptions of the garden. Elizabeth K. Roys’ unique historical accounts constitute a singular and irreplaceable portrait of Asian gardens in the early twentieth century.

The exhibition is available for rental for $2000 for a two-month period (minimum) and $750 for each additional month, plus all shipping expenses. The rental fee includes all panels, framed artwork, and a CD with a PowerPoint presentation showing additional photographs taken by Elizabeth Roys. Text for display labels and signs is provided on disk.

Exhibition Calendar

See the exhibit online at http://www.smith.edu/garden/exhibits/asian_gardens/asian_gardens.html

For more information contact:
Madelaine Zadik, Manager of Education and Outreach
The Botanic Garden of Smith College
Lyman Plant House, 15 College Lane
Northampton, MA 01063 USA
Phone: 413-585-2743, Fax: 413-585-2744
mzadik@smith.edu
IMAGES OF THE EXHIBITION AT SMITH COLLEGE
General Information about Exhibition Rental

1. **Availability:** Now available
2. **Rental Fee:** $2,000 for a two-month period (minimum) and $750 for each additional month. This includes all panels, framed artwork, display label and sign text file on disk, and a PowerPoint file on disk.
3. **Shipping Costs:** The borrowing institution pays all shipping expenses to and from the borrower.
4. **Insurance:** Insurance value of the exhibition is approximately $14,025, and the borrower is responsible for insurance coverage while the exhibition is under its control (including during shipping).
5. **Security Requirements:**
   Security requirements are similar to the “limited security” requirements of SITES (See [www.sites.si.edu/host/security_search.htm#limited](http://www.sites.si.edu/host/security_search.htm#limited)). Personnel must be present at all times in the space while the exhibition is open to the public. Supervision by guard, student, volunteer, or receptionist is acceptable, and they may be performing other duties as well as watching the exhibition. Secure storage for shipping crates is required. The exhibition area must be locked and secure during closed hours. Fire protection must meet all local ordinances.
6. **Space and Equipment Requirements:**
   i. Running feet for all the panels is approximately 64 feet, but that doesn’t include any space between panels. At the Botanic Garden at Smith College we used about 95 running feet to display all the panels, artwork, and a computer monitor that was running a PowerPoint presentation on a continuous loop.
   ii. The Botanic Garden of Smith College will provide the PowerPoint file. If this is to be shown, a computer, monitor, and electricity will be necessary.
7. **Environmental Requirements:**
   i. The exhibition must be displayed indoors.
   ii. Direct sunlight must be diffused or eliminated to prevent fading.
   iii. None of the panels or artwork may come into contact with heating or ventilation outlets when on display or in storage.
   iv. The exhibition space must have humidity and temperature controls to eliminate great fluctuations in either temperature or humidity.

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### Exhibition Panel Sizes and Artwork Dimensions

#### Photo Display Panels
All panels are printed, laminated, mounted on gatorboard, and in frosted silver metal frames, ready to be hung.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Panel</th>
<th>Size in inches (W × H)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Large Entranceway Photo Panels</td>
<td>34 x 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Photo Panels</td>
<td>24 x 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Photo Panel</td>
<td>36 x 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Photo Panel</td>
<td>10 x 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Photo Panel</td>
<td>10 x 6.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Photo Panel</td>
<td>10 x 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Text Display Panels
All panels are printed, laminated, mounted on gatorboard, and in frosted silver metal frames, ready to be hung.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Panel</th>
<th>Size in inches (W × H)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exhibit Credit Panel</td>
<td>20.25 x 42.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Title Panel and Intro Panel</td>
<td>52.25 x 19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Biographical Panel</td>
<td>22.25 x 36.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Biographical Panel</td>
<td>36.25 x 30.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Plant List Panels</td>
<td>18.25 x 11.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Country Panels*</td>
<td>24.25 x 36.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*(each country panel is displayed together with 3 of the matted framed photos for that country - see below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Matted and Framed Photos
Printed photographs with white mats and black metal frames, ready to be hung.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Panel</th>
<th>Size in inches (W × H)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Matted and Framed Photos*</td>
<td>14 x 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*(5 groups of 3 photos which correspond to each country panel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Matted and Framed Photos**</td>
<td>14 x 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Matted and Framed Photos**</td>
<td>11 x 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>** (placement is discretionary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Photo Labels
We will provide a digital file containing the text for the image explanations.
A Childhood in China

Elizabeth Kirkland Reys was uniquely suited to undertake a study of Asian gardens. The daughter of Presbyterian missionaries, she was born in Weilinren, China, in 1905 and lived in northern China until she was fifteen. Her parents generously loved the Chinese people, culture, and language, and they instilled this appreciation in their daughter.

Elizabeth was the eldest of three girls born to Dr. Charles K. Reys and Mildred Reys (Omith College class of 1904). The Reys were passionately attached to their work in China and devoted themselves to learning Chinese in the early years. Their experiences were marked by deep joy as well as profound sorrow. Mildred filled her days serving reports for newspapers and colleagues at home and helping with the charitable, medical, and religious work of the mission. In 1910 the death of their second daughter Carolyn dealt a great loss, followed by the birth of their only daughter Mary.

As chief surgeon at the teaching hospital in Weilinren, Dr. Reys treated many Bless. In 1916 the family moved to Tientsin, where Dr. Reys was appointed professor of anatomy at the new China Medical College. His work was cut short by a brain tumor, and the family moved to the United States for his treatment at the Mayo Clinic. Charles Reys died in 1920 when Elizabeth was fifteen.

At nineteen, Elizabeth took up the lifelong project she had shared with her husband, Mildred Reys, to accept her appointment as General Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Becoming the first woman to carry administrative responsibility for the foreign field. She toured Asia in 1926-27, inspecting the missions under her charge. The greater portion of the trip was spent in China, especially in Manchuria, Peking, and Shanghai. When she returned she began her work as a writer and participated in many scholarly and literary activities.

A Botanical Journey and Lifelong Passion

Through Elizabeth Reys’s efforts and her mother Mildred Reys’s warm sentiments, much had a very different look during the 1920-22 Asian experience. While Mildred visited Presbyterian missions and attended meetings, Elizabeth explored gardens in Japan, Korea, China, Korea, and India. She often spent an entire day in a single garden, photographing its beauty and charm.

Elizabeth Reys had a keen eye for plants—particularly roses—and her mother’s kindness in sending her daughter’s delight in collecting Japanese “paper” as an Asian garden. Arrived with her sister in the Mission Field College in Taipei, Taiwan. The Two Sisters Garden is a beautiful example of how one person can transform an entire garden with their vision and passion. Elizabeth Reys spent her later years working on her passion for gardens and plants. She continued to publish articles and books on the subject of botany, and her work earned her several honorary degrees.

When she graduated from high school in 1928, Elizabeth Reys enrolled at the Kiel School of Botany, where she studied botany and horticulture. She later worked as a botanist at the University of Missouri, where she also taught. She worked closely with other botanists and horticulturists, and her research helped to bring about new species to the garden. She continued her passion for gardens and plants throughout her life, and her work earned her several honorary degrees. Her dedication to the study of botanicals and plants continued until her death in 1954.
Entranceway Panels

[Images of various entranceway panels from different cultures]
Country Display Panels

The Gardens of China

The beauty of the gardens in China is reflected in the intricate networks of water canals and stone pathways. The gardens are designed to harmonize with the landscape, creating a sense of tranquility and serenity. The Chinese garden style emphasizes natural beauty and simplicity, with a strong emphasis on negative space and the use of natural elements such as water, rocks, and trees. The gardens often feature a variety of landscapes, including hills, streams, and bridges, and are designed to be viewed from different angles and perspectives.

The Gardens of Japan

The Japanese garden style, known as kare-sansui, or dry landscape, is characterized by its simplicity and minimalism. The gardens are designed to be a reflection of the natural world, with elements such as rocks, sand, and gravel representing the mountains, seas, and rivers of Japan. The designs often feature a symbolic representation of nature, with the use of natural elements such as trees, rocks, and water to create a sense of peace and tranquility.

The Gardens of Korea

Korean gardens are known for their simplicity and elegance. The gardens are designed to harmonize with the surrounding landscape, and often feature a strong use of straight lines and angles. The designs often incorporate elements such as stone pavilions, water features, and trees, creating a sense of serenity and harmony.

The Gardens of Siam

Thai gardens are known for their vibrant colors and intricate designs. The gardens often feature a strong use of water features, such as ponds and waterfalls, as well as a variety of plants and flowers. The designs often incorporate elements such as亭子 and pergolas, creating a sense of cultural and historical significance.

The Gardens of India

The Indian garden style, known as Mughal, is characterized by its use of formal geometry and a strong emphasis on symmetry and balance. The gardens often feature a variety of elements, including water features, gardens, and pavilions, creating a sense of grandeur and majesty. The designs often incorporate elements such as fountains, pools, and reflecting ponds, creating a sense of tranquility and serenity.

These gardens are a testament to the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of the regions they represent, and they continue to inspire and challenge garden designers and enthusiasts around the world.
Asian Gardens of the 1920s: The Travels of Elizabeth K. Roys
Illustrated Lecture Available by Curator Betsy Anderson

Elizabeth K. Roys was a student of botany at Smith College when she embarked on an extensive tour of Asia. From 1926 to 1927, she traveled through Japan, China, Korea, Siam, and India, studying and photographing their gardens and compiling her observations into a collection of five notebooks that have only recently been discovered. Roys’ keenly perceptive chronicle of her journey is richly accompanied by hundreds of her own stunning photographs and numerous hand-drawn plans, many of which will be shared for the first time in a singular slide lecture by exhibit curator Betsy Anderson.

This exploration of Elizabeth Roys’ notebooks and the expedition that inspired them is a perfect complement to the exhibit, Asian Gardens of the 1920s. The talk additionally draws upon remarkable family photographs and correspondence, merging the compelling story of Roys’ life with her fascinating analysis of Asian gardens in the early twentieth century. What inspired this young woman to undertake such a long voyage with such an intense purpose? How did her unique perspective—born in China as a child of missionaries, and always captivated by the natural world—influence the research and writing of these exceptional documents? Which, if any, avenues were open to Roys to continue her work in a field dominated by men, and how did her 1926–27 Asian trip shape the rest of her life? The illustrated program will answer these questions and detail the plants and gardens that Roys so carefully recorded.

Betsy Anderson, Garden Historian at The Mount (Edith Wharton’s Estate and Gardens in Lenox, Massachusetts), has lectured throughout the Northeast on Edith Wharton’s gardens as well as on other outstanding twentieth-century landscapes, including Fletcher Steele’s design of Naumkeag. She directs the garden interpretative programming at The Mount, and in 2006 she organized the first conference devoted to Wharton as a garden designer: its accompanying publication, Edith Wharton and the American Garden, will be available in summer 2007.

Anderson is a 2004 graduate of Smith College with Highest Honors in French Studies; her honors thesis explored the evolution of the seventeenth-century French garden in literature, and like Roys she studied botany and horticulture at Smith’s world-class botanic garden. Having worked and studied on numerous French and English estates, she is now thrilled to present the gardens of Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, and India through the writings, drawings, and photographs of Elizabeth Roys.