



Ian Hamilton Finlay: A Model of Order: Selected Letters on Poetry and Making

By Ian Hamilton Finlay



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"It doesn't greatly matter to me whether I'm using plants or trees or stones or words or events," the artist, poet and gardener Ian Hamilton Finlay (1925–2006) once told an interviewer; "the impulse is always to make a coherent order out of things." Through a carefully edited selection from a voluminous correspondence, *A Model of Order* tracks the unique arc of Finlay's development, from poet writing in Scots dialect, to Concrete poet, toymaker and deviser of poems and inscriptions in glass, wood and stone, installed in parks and gardens. The title derives from Finlay's famous definition of Concrete poetry as "a model of order, even if set in a space which is full of doubt," a definition conceived in correspondence with poet Pierre Garnier. Poet and editor Thomas A. Clark's selection of Finlay's letters to Louis Zukofsky, Robert Creeley and Ernst Jandl among others explicates a rigorous and moral vision of the act of making.

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