

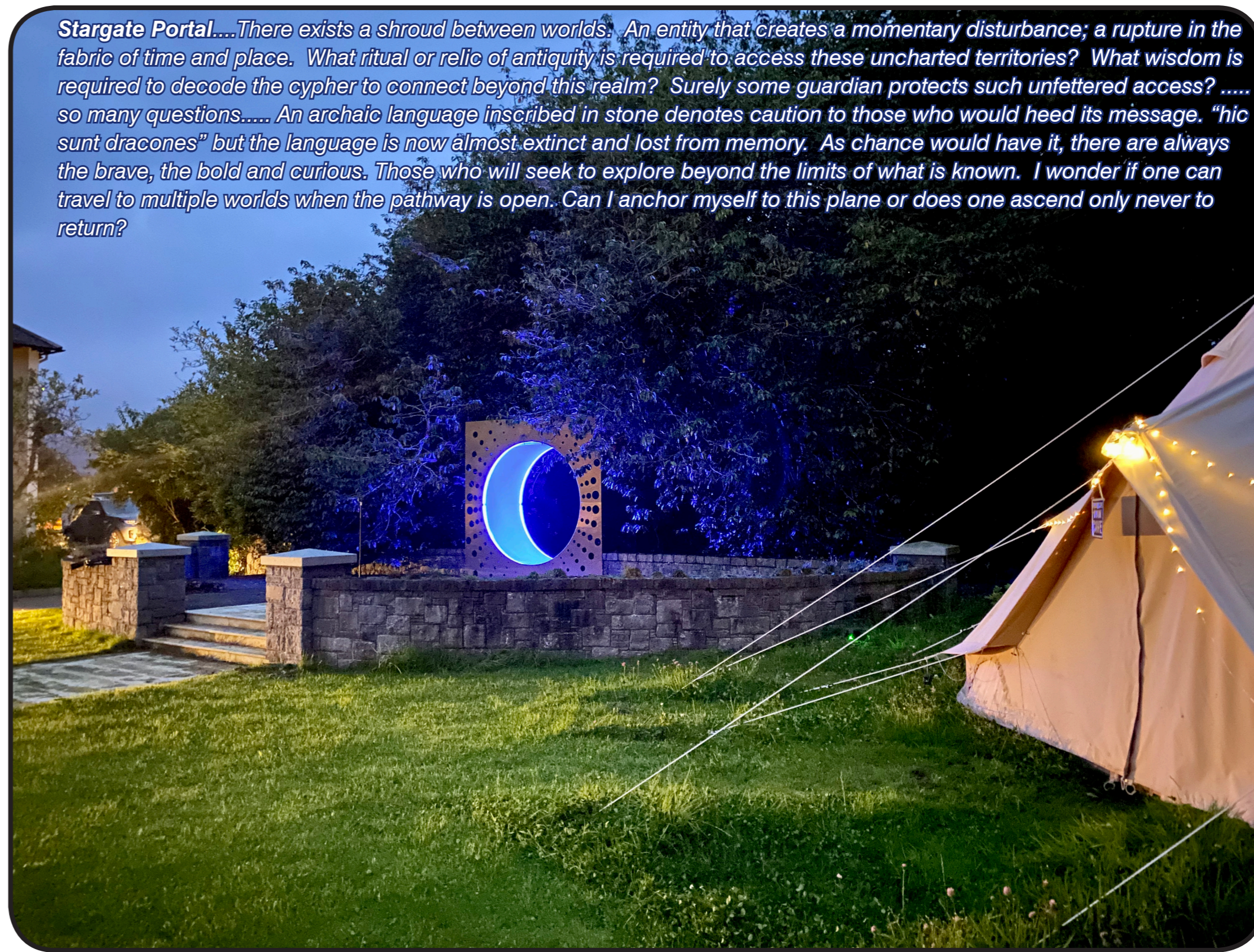


HOCTOR SMYTH  
**THE FAY GARDEN**  
**MARK MCDOWALL**

**Private Garden: Fay residence**  
**Complete: June 2019**  
**Landscape Architect: Mark McDowall**  
The site located in Kinnitty, Co. Offaly is home to an old Georgian Rectory sitting within grounds of approximately 6 Acres. A selective edit of vegetation revealed a large Walnut tree, now the central focus of the arrival garden. Approaching the house, the driveway now splits in two permitting views of the stately home. The "Arrival Garden" provides display planting with a mix of flowering species for seasonal interest and the entry forecourt is home to a large Trachycarpus. From this position one can look over the formal lawn. A manicured rectangle of grass separated from the wildflower meadow beyond by new stone Ha-ha wall. Five children now regularly enjoy a sports lawn, sandpit and in-ground trampoline complete with bright coloured safety surface. A designed circular bench provides a place to sit, under an existing Copper Beech. The botanic laser cut pattern pays homage to a bygone Victorian era where planting pattern was celebrated in cast iron garden furniture. An old idea re-visited but with a contemporary twist. The rear garden accommodates a raised paved terrace overlooking a circular lawn where filtered views are now permitted to the landscape beyond. Here an old defunct built-in BBQ area has been given new purpose. The space was re-imagined as an exciting threshold to allow children to gain access to the forest behind. The "Stargate Portal" now bridges the rear garden and "enchanted forest" offering a unique transition and night landscape experience.



**Shadow dancer....** the orange botanic patterned plate hovers over an internal black steel sheet inscribed with concentric rings that mimic the annual growth rings found within the tree, to produce a moiré pattern that perpetually shifts. When the sun arrives, shadows join the dance and the original dark coloured pattern of the tree bench seat is inverted; projected as a pattern of light on the ground plane.



**Stargate Portal....**There exists a shroud between worlds. An entity that creates a momentary disturbance; a rupture in the fabric of time and place. What ritual or relic of antiquity is required to access these uncharted territories? What wisdom is required to decode the cypher to connect beyond this realm? Surely some guardian protects such unfettered access? ..... so many questions..... An archaic language inscribed in stone denotes caution to those who would heed its message. "hic sunt dracones" but the language is now almost extinct and lost from memory. As chance would have it, there are always the brave, the bold and curious. Those who will seek to explore beyond the limits of what is known. I wonder if one can travel to multiple worlds when the pathway is open. Can I anchor myself to this plane or does one ascend only never to return?

