



The Poetics of Gardens (MIT Press)

Charles W. Moore, William J. Mitchell, William Turnbull Jr.

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There is a universality about the creation of gardens across time and in diverse cultures that has inspired this entirely different garden book: a playful and affectionate typology of gardens; a pattern book in which a score of landscapes and gardens are drawn, described, and analyzed not just as a bouquet of pleasures but as sources, lodes to be mined for materials, shapes and relationships, and ideas for transforming our own backyards.

The Poetics of Gardens is a celebration of places and the gardens they can become. Most of the 500 sketches, axonometric drawings, and photographs were created especially for this book. They explore the special qualities of places and the acts that can transform them into gardens.

The authors discuss the qualities that create the promise of a garden the shapes of land and water, the established plants, the light and wind, the climate and show how these can be organized to give a place a special meaning. And they pay particular attention to the "rituals of habitation" by which we imaginatively take possession of places on the surface of the earth.

The Poetics of Gardens examines great gardens made in other places, with other climates, at other times from ancient Rome to modern England, from Ball to Botany Bay, from the court of Ch'ien Lung to the magic kingdom of Walt Disney to explore their devices and record their images, scents, and sounds. The authors discuss the adaptation of the great garden traditions of the past to North American soil and call together the creators of these gardens to speculate about how their patterns and ideas can be appropriated, transformed, and composed into places that come alive for us.

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