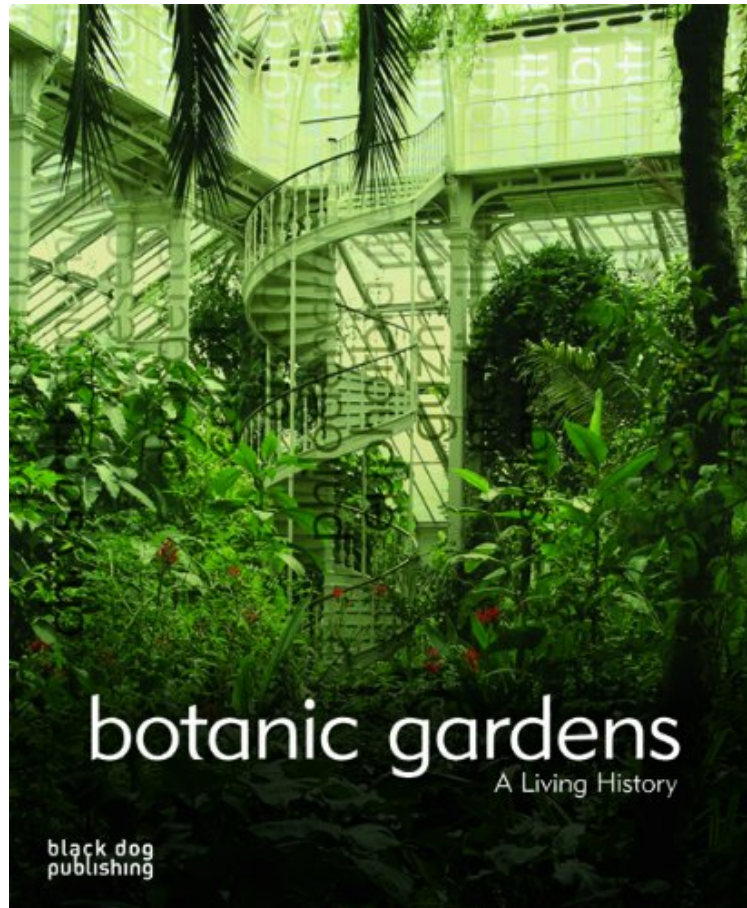


## Botanic Gardens: A Living History

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**From Brand: Black Dog Publishing : Botanic Gardens: A Living History** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Botanic Gardens: A Living History:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Perfect mix of text photos, subject expertise-By L.T.N Seemingly consigned as a perpetual wallflower to the decorative floral garden, the botanic garden gets it due in this nicely designed book that has enough examples with well-done photos to please those whose emphasis is on the visual, and enough information to satisfy those who want more history of the many listed gardens specifically, and the botanic or 'physic' garden in general. While botanic gardens might be decorative, and have at least some eye-catching floral sections, that's incidental to their purpose of fulfilling the role of part natural history museum, part living catalog of medicinal plants curiosities. I have seen botanical garden books that featured either a particular garden or several from one region or country (the New York, Brooklyn, London's Kew have more than one book dedicated to their collections), but I have not come across a compendium like this one. Every part of the world is covered, and it seems every effort was taken to be thorough. Not content to cover just the major botanical gardens, every continent is represented by several collections. The editors and contributors place more importance on history and uniqueness

rather than size or proximity to large population areas. Apparently, judging by pictures of some gardens in rather inhospitable climates, aesthetics and flashiness were not a prerequisite either (who knew that the almost treeless landscape of Iceland had a botanical garden that wasn't confined to greenhouses ?) Its this inclusion of the odd and unique, plus the effort to cover as much of the world as possible, that makes this book a nice addition for natural history and gardening fans both. It also has lengthy essays about the history of botanical gardens, especially when they were more of a working physic garden for medicines of the time than the research/museum collections that they've evolved into. The 20-page "Where Art Science Meet" essay penned by Margaret Stevens is the highlight of these. Minor quibbles: while the fantastic University of British Columbia botanical garden in Vancouver, Canada is included, the equally interesting Van Dusen Botanical Garden a few miles to the east is not. And while several natural history/botanical artists are mentioned, the pioneer of butterfly metamorphosis, explorer of Surinam, and more --- Maria Sibylla Merian --- is left out. But these are a matter of personal feelings, and I can't see anyone not enjoying this lushly photographed and well-written oversize book. Hasn't it always been the measure of great travel books that they make you want to visit the places it covers ? Same thing here...you'll want to see these gardens.

This visually stunning hardback book unearths the fascinating history of the botanic garden, from the first modern gardens founded in Northern Italy, to the technological achievements of contemporary gardens. For the last 400 years, botanic gardens have played a multitude of roles in society. They function as public plant collections and displays, as centres for learning and scientific research, and increasingly as institutions of environmental conservation. *Botanic Gardens: A Living History* draws on a range of iconographic and textual treasures including photography, architectural plans, drawings, scientific journals and personal accounts to examine these mesmerising institutions. Global in scope, the book explores gardens including: Bologna, Brussels, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Heidelberg, Kew, Leiden, Leipzig, Melbourne, Montreal, Padua, Santa Barbara, Sydney, Uppsala and Paris. The key personalities involved in the establishment of the gardens are profiled an extraordinary catalogue of explorers, scientists, architects, noblemen, botanists, visionaries and dreamers. The architecture of the gardens is explored in depth, from the colonial opulence of eighteenth and nineteenth century gardens, to innovative modern developments, including The Eden Project designed by Jonathan Ball and Sir Nicholas Grimshaw. Four rigorous essays investigate the history and future of botanic gardens as institutions of conservation and recreation. A wide range of expert voices chart the development of the botanic garden, including Rosie Atkins (founder of *Gardens Illustrated* magazine), Mike Maunder (Director of the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden), John Parker (Director of Cambridge University Botanic Garden), Holly Shimizu (Director of the United States Botanic Garden), Gregory Long (President of the New York Botanical Garden) and Margaret Stevens (Founder and President of the Society of Botanical Artists). The only truly comprehensive and up-to-date survey of these increasingly valuable organisations, *Botanic Gardens: A Living History* is a vibrant, beautiful book.

"A comprehensive look at these fascinating institutions." *The Evening Standard* "The feeling of wonderment that botanic gardens can bring is captured in this book perfectly." *BBC Homes and Antiques* "Enjoyable reading... Anyone interested in the scope of botanic gardens, including relatively unknown and recently founded institutions, will find this book a useful reference." *BBC Gardens Illustrated* About the Author A wide range of expert voices chart the development of the botanic garden, including Rosie Atkins (founder of *Gardens Illustrated* magazine), Mike Maunder (Director of the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden), John Parker (Director of Cambridge University Botanic Garden), Holly Shimizu (Director of the United States Botanic Garden), Gregory Long (President of the New York Botanical Garden) and Margaret Stevens (Founder and President of the Society of Botanical Artists).