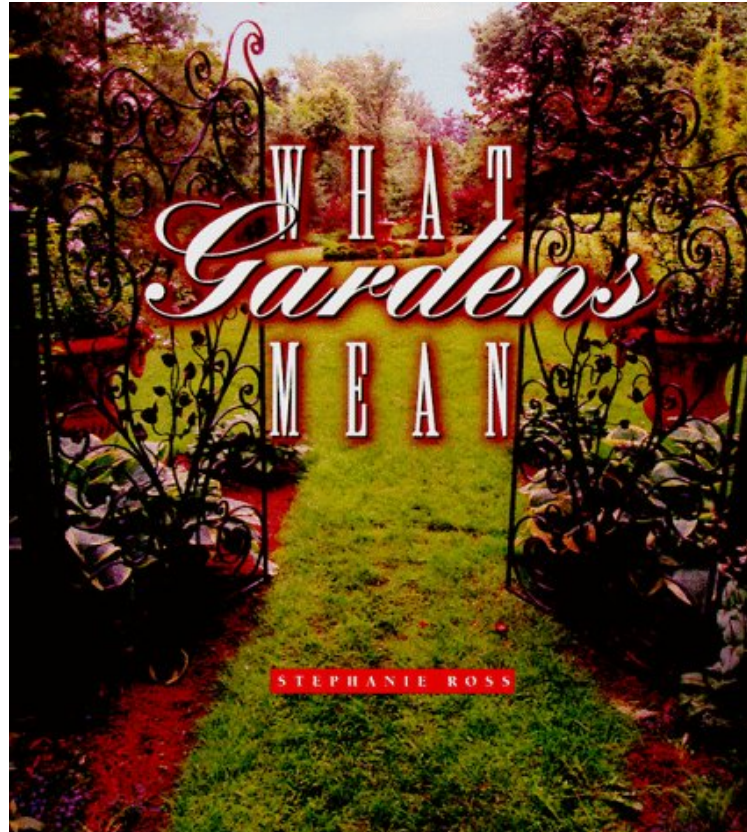


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## What Gardens Mean

*Stephanie Ross*

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**Stephanie Ross : What Gardens Mean** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Gardens Mean:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. value for this price. By MonroeGot this product as a Father's Day gift. He loves the product. For its price, it is excellent quality. A very good looking tool too. In addition, the customer service was excellent. I certainly would recommend it! good product with high quality. professional service. my neighbor love it, low price. 7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A relaxing read By Susan Winters This book is one of great information and well thought text from a brilliant author. There are books that you will read and not remember the important things needed but then there is this book..... Stephanie puts forth the information in such a format that you can not forget the gripping details. It is a must read book.

Are gardens works of art? What is involved in creating a garden? How are gardens experienced by those who stroll through them? In *What Gardens Mean*, Stephanie Ross draws on philosophy as well as the histories of art, gardens, culture, and ideas to explore the magical lure of gardens. Paying special attention to the amazing landscape gardens of eighteenth-century England, she situates gardening among the other fine arts, documenting the complex messages gardens can convey and tracing various connections between gardens and the art of painting. *What Gardens Mean*

offers a distinctive blend of historical and contemporary material, ranging from extensive accounts of famous eighteenth-century gardens to incisive connections with present-day philosophical debates. And while Ross examines aesthetic writings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including Joseph Addison's Spectator essays on the pleasures of imagination, the book's opening chapter surveys more recent theories about the nature and boundaries of art. She also considers gardens on their own terms, following changes in garden style, analyzing the phenomenal experience of viewing or strolling through a garden, and challenging the claim that the art of gardening is now a dead one. Showing that an artistic lineage can be traced from gardens in the Age of Satire to current environmental installations, this book is a sophisticated account of the myriad pleasures that gardens offer and a testimony to their enduring sensory and cognitive appeal. Beautifully illustrated and elegantly written, *What Gardens Mean* will delight all those interested in the history of gardens and the aesthetic and philosophical issues that they invite. "Replete with provocative musings, Ross delineates links that should prove interesting to readers engaged in pondering our capacity to relate to the natural world through the gardens we create." *Booklist* "[A]n innovative and absorbing study of the garden as an object of aesthetic interest." *Allen Carlson, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* "[P]leasantly readable. . . . A thought-provoking book for all who reflect as they dig." *Noel Kingsbury, Country Life* "[A] refreshing view of the subject. . . . Ross's book is continually illuminating in unexpected ways." *Gillian Darley, Architects' Journal* "*What Gardens Mean* is a wonderful intellectual combination of discussions on the interdisciplinary histories of art, gardening, and philosophy." *Choice*

From *Library Journal* Ross (philosophy, Univ. of Missouri, St. Louis) asks whether a garden can be a work of art. Beginning by surveying recent theories about the nature and boundaries of art, she then devotes a chapter to the history and sources of 18th-century English landscape gardens, questioning whether they can be considered works of art. She investigates why gardening did not develop the same organizational structure as other arts, resulting in royal academies such as those formed in France and England for the visual arts. Ross writes in an academic style that makes her book read like a doctoral dissertation, with lists of points to be proven or disputed and extensive definitions of terms. Except in her innovative last chapter, in which she posits that gardens transmuted into 20th-century earthworks and environmental art, Ross limits her discussions to large landscape gardens. Within this strict limitation, her observations are insightful, especially about English landscape gardens, but this book is more a study of aesthetics than of gardens. For academic libraries only. *ADaniel Starr, Museum of Modern Art, New York* Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Philosophical underpinnings imbue Ross' treatise with a certain density, yet questions raised weave a lively fabric that could figure prominently in an ongoing dialogue concerning the meaning of gardens . . . and the art of gardening. Eighteenth-century English gardens afforded incisive overviews, with Ross interpreting connections between painting, poetry, and garden design, and from iconography to representation. Moving far forward in time, Ross uses contemporary examples to ponder how we experience gardens; she then goes on to posit a relationship between the so-called death of art and the fate of gardens. With provocative musings, Ross delineates links that should prove interesting to readers engaged in pondering our capacity to relate to the natural world through the gardens we create. *Alice Joyce* From the Inside Flap In this beautifully illustrated and elegantly written book, *Stephanie Ross* explores the magical lure of gardens. Paying special attention to the landscape gardens of eighteenth-century England, Ross situates gardening among other fine arts, documenting the complex messages gardens can convey and tracing connections between gardens and the art of painting.