

Imagining the Modern City



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Paris, Berlin, London, Singapore, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles -- these define "the

city" in the world's consciousness. James Donald takes us on a psychic journey to these places that have inspired artists, writers, architects, and filmmakers for centuries. Considering the cultural and political implications of the "urban imaginary," Donald explores the pleasures and challenges of modern living, contending that the imagined city remains the best lens for a future of democratic community. How can we think of Chicago without recalling the grittiness of *The Asphalt Jungle*'s back alleys, or of London without the dank, foggy atmosphere so often evoked by Dickens? When de Certeau explores what it means to walk through a city, or Foucault dissects the elements of the modern attitude, what are they telling us about modernity itself? Through a discussion of these and many other questions about urban thought, Donald demonstrates how artists and social critics have seen the city as the locus not just of vanity, squalor, and injustice, but also of civilized society's highest aspirations. *Imagining the modern City* also looks at how artists have shaped cities through their creation of public spaces, sculpture, and architecture -- art forms that help determine our ideas about our place in the urban environment. Planners and architects such as Otto Wagner, Le Corbusier, and Bernard Tschumi present us with real and possible cities, showing a way forward to alternative social futures, Donald asserts. The modern city provides both a culturally resonant imagined space and a physical place for the everyday life of its residents. *Imagining the Modern City* is a rich and dazzling exploration of the ways cities stir and shape our consciousness.

作者介绍:

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