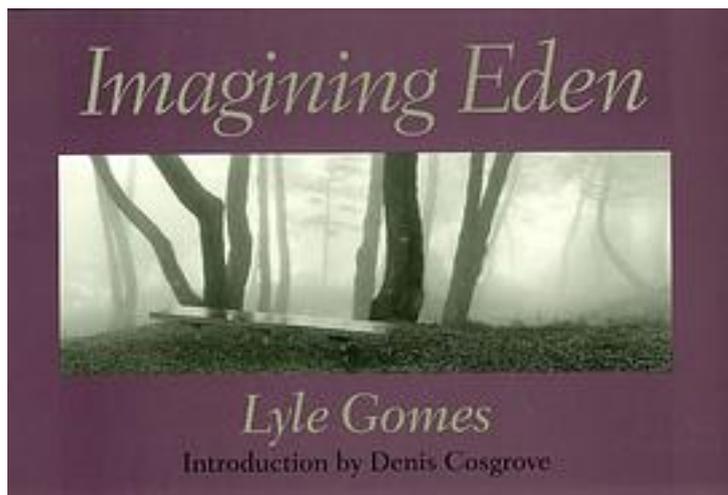


Imagining Eden



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著者:Gomes, Lyle

出版者:Univ of Virginia Pr

出版时间:2005-9

装帧:HRD

isbn:9780813923826

"Because Eden's genius resides in imagination, it is a mobile spirit; always found in place but never confined by place. The spirit of Eden migrates within us, animated through our imaginative responses to actual places in the material world, in our roles as gardeners and poets, painters and photographers."--from the introduction What did Eden look like? In "Imagining Eden" the photographer Lyle Gomes observes landscapes that represent the idea of "locus amoenus"--the pleasant place. The tradition of "locus amoenus" goes back to the idyllic descriptions of fictional locations, often called Arcadia, in the writings of Sappho, Apollonius, and Virgil, in the imagined period of the Golden Age. We also recognize this concept in Eden, of course, where it suggests a loss that still haunts our imaginations. It is an idea distinctly different from that of wilderness, for we feel protected in these places--even provided for, though there is no sign of toil. The chance that this Eden might somehow be regained gives the concept its consolatory power. For fifteen years, Gomes has traveled across America and Europe to find examples of this enduring ideal of place in parks, English gardens, even golf courses. Gomes's search took him to Mount Auburn cemetery, Central Park,

Monticello, the San Francisco Presidio, villa gardens near Italy's Lake Como, Melbourne Hall in Derbyshire, and private gardens such as Biltmore and Dumbarton Oaks. "Imagining Eden" includes an eloquent introductory essay in which the landscape historian Denis Cosgrove explores how the concept of the "locus amoenus" relates to Gomes's work, and the photographs are accompanied by an evocative selection of quotes by the various settings' designers and by inspired observers. The book concludes with an extensive interview in which Gomes discusses how he balances craft and inspiration, the role of research in preparing a shoot, his preference for black-and-white over color ("I was completely, and immediately, enamored with the silver image"), and a sense of discovery as a chief motivation in all his work.

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