



The Chinese Garden: History, Art and Architecture, Third Edition

By Maggie Keswick

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The Chinese Garden: History, Art and Architecture, Third Edition By Maggie Keswick

Dense with winding paths, dominated by huge rock piles and buildings squeezed into small spaces, the characteristic Chinese garden is, for many foreigners, so unlike anything else as to be incomprehensible. Only on closer acquaintance does it offer up its mysteries; and such is the achievement of Maggie Keswick's celebrated classic that it affords us--adventurers, armchair travelers, and garden buffs alike--the intimate pleasures of the Chinese garden.

In these richly illustrated pages, Chinese gardens unfold as cosmic diagrams, revealing a profound and ancient view of the world and of humanity's place in it. First sensuous impressions give way to more cerebral delights, and forms conjure unending, increasingly esoteric and mystical layers of meaning for the initiate. Keswick conducts us through the art and architecture, the principles and techniques of Chinese gardens, showing us their long history as the background for a civilization--the settings for China's great poets and painters, the scenes of ribald parties and peaceful contemplation, political intrigues and family festivals.

Updated and expanded in this third edition, with an introduction by Alison Hardie, many new illustrations, and an updated list of gardens in China accessible to visitors, Keswick's engaging work remains unparalleled as an introduction to the Chinese garden.

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Editorial Review

Review

After reading Maggie Keswick's sensitive study one is tempted to run off to Suzhou using *The Chinese Garden* as a spiritual guidebook. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*)

[Keswick] shows, in a complex and even exhilarating argument, how the gardens are contrived with enormous subtlety to look like accidental snatches of nature. (*New York Times*)

Chinese gardens are high among the wonders of Chinese art, but they do not receive the attention they deserve...The late Maggie Keswick's well-received original volume of the same title was a *tour-de-force* of insight, which this update enhances.

--J. O. Caswell (*Choice* 2003-11-01)

Twenty-five years ago, at the prompting of her husband, Charles Jencks, British designer Maggie Keswick set about explaining to Western readers the ancient logic and symbolism of Chinese gardens. She did it with rare empathy. The only child of Sir John Keswick, chairman of a trading company with roots in the Orient going back to the Opium Wars, she had spent much of her childhood in and out of China. *The Chinese Garden* was so enlightening it was reissued...giving Keswick a crack at a new generation...Her introduction to this strange and beautiful world was so good, her touch so light, one could only nod, smile and turn the page for a fresh delight. (*Los Angeles Times*)

About the Author

Maggie Keswick was educated in Shanghai and Hong Kong and at Oxford University; she was married to the architectural critic and historian Charles Jencks, who contributed to this book.

Alison Hardie is a lecturer in Chinese studies at Newcastle University. She has done extensive research into Chinese gardens, specializing in Chinese garden design in the later Ming dynasty, and is translator of the classic Chinese garden text *The Craft of Gardens (Yuan Ye)* by Ji Cheng. She first met Maggie Keswick in China twenty years ago, and it was following Maggie's lead that she embarked on her study of Chinese gardens.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michelle Oquinn:

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Penny Risley:

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