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What Is A Garden?



Synopsis

Poet and environmentalist W. S. Merwin moved to Hawaii in 1976 and has spent the last forty years planting nineteen acres with more than eight hundred species of palm, creating a lush garden on a ruined former pineapple plantation. Now the Merwin Conservancy, this land has served as Merwin's muse and his passion, appearing as a consistent subject of his poems and his germinal essays on conservation. *What Is a Garden?* collects eight of Merwin's poems and three of his essays emblematic of his palm garden writings from the 1980s to the present and presents them alongside photographer Larry Cameron's spectacular images of Merwin's garden, all taken between 2013 and 2014. These photographs lure readers deep into Merwin's palm garden and offers a rare glimpse into this private exotic landscape as a visual feast for the viewer, rich with insights into the spirit of the place that has inspired Merwin's poetry. Cameron first met Merwin in the early 1990s while working on a documentary film about the emergence of Merwin's environmental consciousness. *What Is a Garden?* also includes a new introduction by Merwin chronicling his personal history with his palm garden, Cameron's photographer's note on his friendship with the poet and his inspiration for this collection, and an identification guide to the plants featured in the volume.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After the stellar review in the New York Times Book Review, I was prompted to order a copy of this handsome book, which has since made a fine wedding gift. Merwin's poetry and essays are

powerfully moving, as to be expected, but the welcome surprise was just how well Cameron's immersive photography complements the text. The photos lend themselves to multiple viewings, with new discoveries to be appreciated each time. Themes of patience, conservation, collaboration, and honoring our stewardship of our shared Earth permeate these pages. What a treasure. Now I need to replace the copy I've given away!

W.s. Merwin's thoughts through poetry take another dimension with the garden photographs.

Patricia

This is a wonderful book. Truly a gift from W.S. Merwin!!!

Beautiful photos of Merwin's creation.

Wonderful, incredible poetry from one of the best poets ever. Beautiful pictures. Awesome narrative. Makes a great gift for your loved ones or yourself.

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