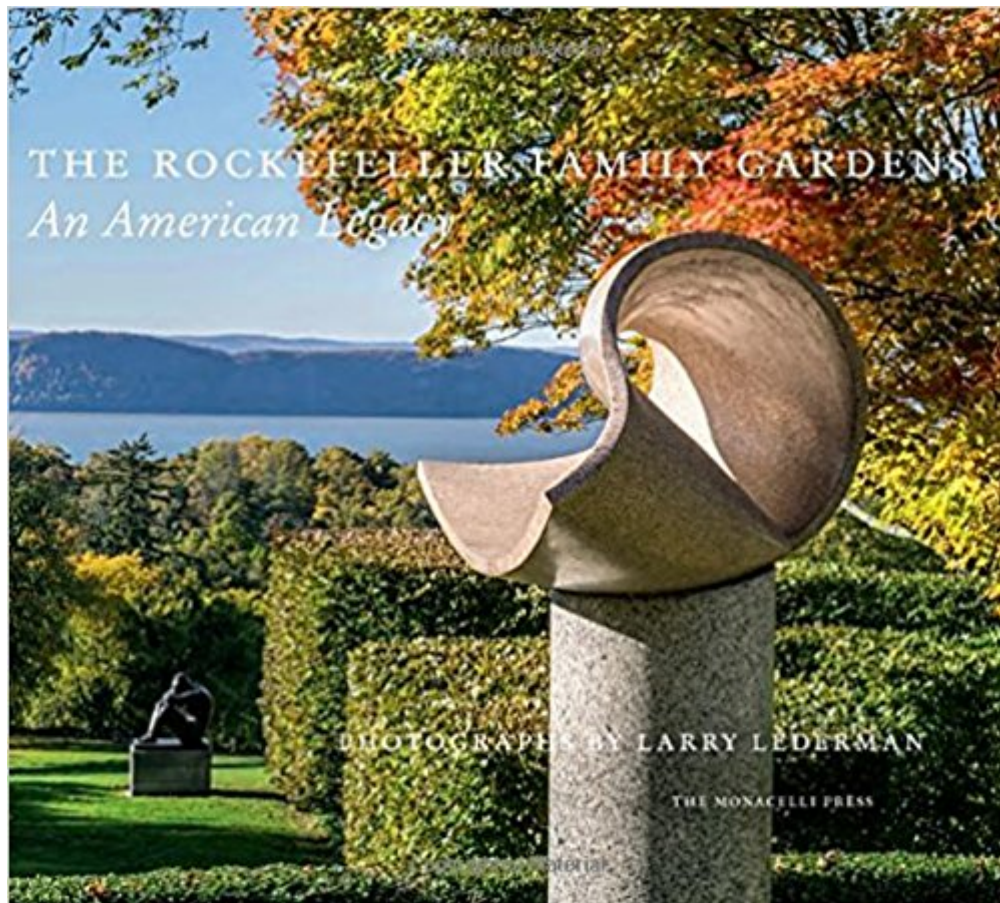




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The Rockefeller Family Gardens: An American Legacy



Synopsis

Larry Lederman takes readers on a privileged photographic tour through the Rockefeller family gardens in the Hudson Valley and Maine. The Rockefeller family is synonymous with great wealth, extraordinary philanthropy, and exceptional stewardship of unspoiled landscapes. In their private world, the Rockefellers have created extraordinary gardens. Over the course of a century, their grounds have matured and evolved to reflect the layered visions of three generations of the Rockefeller family. At Kykuit in the Hudson Valley, John D. Rockefeller valued broad expanses of lawns with a noble forest of evergreens at the perimeter. His son John D. Rockefeller Jr. molded this landscape into a more formal Beaux-Arts garden design. This garden was later enhanced by Nelson A. Rockefeller's addition of an extensive collection of twentieth-century sculpture, which is still in place today. In *The Rockefeller Family Gardens*, photographer Larry Lederman gives readers unprecedented access to the two Kykuit gardens—the expansive Beaux-Arts style garden and a little-known Japanese garden, brought to life by Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller. This book also takes readers inside the garden at Eyrie, the family summer retreat in Seal Harbor, Maine. There, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller collaborated with noted designer Beatrix Farrand to design a walled garden inspired by Asian aesthetics at the perimeter and filled with traditional perennials. Lederman's photographs capture the beauty of these gardens in all seasons, focusing on the geometry of the designs and the color and light that animates them. This tour through the spaces is accompanied by text from Todd Forrest of the New York Botanical Garden, Cassie Banning of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden, and Cynthia Bronson Altman of Kykuit to provide commentary on the design and plant materials featured in this captivating collection of photos.

Book Information

Hardcover: 200 pages

Publisher: The Monacelli Press (April 25, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580934870

ISBN-13: 978-1580934879

Product Dimensions: 10.9 x 0.9 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #325,260 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #77 in Books > Travel > United

States > Northeast > General #95 in [The New York Times](#) > Books > Travel > United States > New York > General
#197 in [The New York Times](#) > Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Landscape

Customer Reviews

"The Rockefeller Family Gardens: An American Legacy, with lush photographs by Larry Lederman, captures how gloriously each generation expressed its personal character on a monumental canvas." [The New York Times](#) "Lederman captures moments in nature imbued with atmospheric light, reminiscent of the impressionist style. A delight for garden historians and botanical photographers." [Library Journal](#) "The new book features the photographs of Larry Lederman, a man apparently undeterred by inhospitable weather conditions, who seems to have discovered every tiny nook and cranny of the place. He shows us Rockefeller's creation over a period of years in all seasons and in all kinds of light. We see it early in the morning and at dusk, under gray skies and gleaming in the sun, bursting into bloom in spring, blazing with hot fall color and serenely quiet after a snow fall." [Gardenista](#) "We may not care to admit it, but the gardens of the rich and famous hold a special allure for most of us. Now, thanks to photographer Larry Lederman's discerning eye, we get a whole-book look at two gardens belonging to the Rockefeller family—both designed in the early 20th century and both of great historical interest.... We should be grateful for Lederman's patience: It means we can now experience each garden in its full glory." [1st Dibs](#) "Photographer Larry Lederman shot the retreats over five years, adding yet another contribution to this time, serene beauty to the Rockefeller dynasty's long list." [Manhattan magazine](#) "What Lederman's photographs of the gardens at Kykuit and Eyrie display is a fascinating study of one family's sustained devotion to place, manifested in each generation's evolving philosophy and approach to space." [Flower magazine](#) "In sumptuous photographs, this book documents the progress of the seasons through two gardens: Kykuit (Dutch for 'look-out'), perched high above the Hudson River in the countryside near New York, and Eyrie, the garden in Maine of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, John D.'s art-collecting daughter-in-law and the driving force behind MOMA in New York... The short essays are strong on historical detail, sparking interest in further research. But the meat of this book lies in Lederman's splendid images." [Historic Garden Review](#)

Larry Lederman has been photographing landscapes for the past fifteen years. He is the author of *Magnificent Trees of the New York Botanical Garden* and a contributor to *Interior Landmarks*:

Treasures of New York and The New York Botanical Garden. His work has been exhibited at the Ross Gallery at NYBG and at the Four Seasons Restaurant in New York and is included in public and private collections.

We were curious about this book for a number of reasons. I had first encountered the photographer, Larry Lederman, when he was in his prime as a practicing corporate lawyer. Now retired from the practice of law, he has clearly used his prodigious intellectual capacity to study and capture these beautiful gardens. Our other source of curiosity was having done a glancing blow at the gardens on Mt. Desert Island, we wanted to know more. The bulk of the photographs were made in the gardens close to Tarrytown, N.Y. Those gardens house some wonderful sculptures mixed in with the plantings. In depicting these gardens with the sculptures, Larry has managed to capture excellent light to augment the vistas created by the gardens and the river beyond. He has obviously studied them over a number of seasons and his vantage points were well chosen to give one a feel for them. So, much more than a coffee table book filled with pretty pictures of a garden, this book is a study of the Rockefeller Family gardens designed to give the viewer an understanding of what the gardens intended to do. The history provided by the various authors is, for me, an extra added attraction. So I commend this book to anyone who enjoys excellent landscape photography, expertly conceived and well felt, and anyone who has an interest in historic gardens in the United States.

Enjoying this lovely book and it's connection to Maine. Nice photos!

great book

Beautiful photographs of beautiful gardens.

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