



# Arcadian Visions: Pastoral Influences on Poetry, Painting and the Design of Landscape

*Allan R. Ruff*

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**Arcadian Visions: Pastoral Influences on Poetry, Painting and the Design of Landscape** Allan R. Ruff  
This book is about Arcadia and the pastoral tradition; what it has meant for successive generations and their vision of the landscape, as well as the implications this has had for its design and management. Today the concept of Arcadia, and way it has shaped our landscape, is dimly perceived and little understood by landscape architects and those responsible for the management of land. This is in marked contrast to previous centuries when the vision of Arcadia and the pastoral was implanted by education among the more privileged in society. Young men spent many hours translating and learning by rote the words of Virgil and other classical authors and on the Grand Tour they would be introduced to work of painters like Poussin and Claude and their interpretations of the Ideal pastoral landscape. Today Arcadia holds as powerful an influence as at any time in the past and it is important that we plan our urban environment in ways that harmonize with the natural world.

Arcadian Visions provides an alternative landscape history for all those involved with the landscape - either through its design, management, use or enjoyment. It begins by examining the origins of Arcadia and the pastoral in the classical poetry of Theocritus and Virgil, and the effects of, and on, Christianity before outlining its development in renaissance Italy and subsequently in the Netherlands, America and England. It concludes by looking at how Arcadian ecology is bringing about a reappraisal of the pastoral in the 21st century.

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