BOOK REVIEW


Introduced by noted landscape designer, Eric Johnson, this book is a valuable encyclopedic reference for those who live in the desert and are concerned about what to plant, how to landscape, and what the xeric environment will do to the results. It is also about landscape architecture, and while addressing the needs of professionals, it is also indispensable for the homeowner. Basically Desert Landscape Architecture helps one to evaluate a site for a proposed landscape or garden, so you can make a plan before planting that saguaro in the middle of your yard.

The informative text, written by John C. Krieg, an experienced landscape architect, helps one work with a variety of concepts and materials besides plants, such as grading, drainage, stone, irrigation, hardscape, paths. It teaches the reader how to transform one's cactus collection into a planted paradise. The book, with many illustrative examples, informs the reader as to what one can, and should, expect from landscape architects, contractors, engineers, bureaucrats (permits!). The book is a worthwhile investment, as it provides a valuable tool to the homeowner to learn where all the money goes, an inspiration that strengthens one's resolve to keep everyone on the project honest and accountable.

Desert Landscape Architecture contains chapters that offer detailed and informative discussions that include an overview of desert ecosystems, focusing on the desert Southwest. There are chapters that help one to think through a proposed project, get it down on paper (something most of us rarely do), and utilize professional design strategies, often lacking in desert garden design. Also there are valuable sections on irrigation and irrigation design, laying out paths, and even garden lighting. Each topic in the book has its own glossary that explains the terms used—one of the most valuable features of the book.

The chapters are: (1) North American Deserts, which includes discussions of soils and riparian environments, (2) Landscape Architecture Design, with a section about on-set inventorying, (3) Grading Design, (4) Hardscape Design, materials and concepts, (5) Plant Materials and Planting Design, (6) Irrigation Design, which outlines hydraulic concepts and steps to be followed in the design process, (7) Lighting Design, including discussion of lighting, materials, and design techniques, and (8) Installation and Maintenance, with many tips on troubleshooting.

I highly recommend Desert Landscape Architecture to cactophile desert-dwellers who are contemplating a garden. It is filled with basic design and theory often lacking in the how-to manuals. On the down side, its list of 750 plants is weak on recommended succulents, but that should be of little concern to the cactophile who reads this journal. Also, many of the text drawings are not clearly reproduced nor is their significance to the text clearly stated. There are only black and white photos and again these are not as clearly reproduced as they should be. Clear color photography, especially in the plant compendium, would have pushed this book over the top. Nevertheless, for its detailed, interesting, and enlightening text, John C. Krieg's Desert Landscape Architecture is recommended reading for homeowners, students, and garden designers.

Gary Lyons

PAULUS ROETTER, 1806–1894

Paulus Roetter was world-renowned as a painter of landscapes and botanical subjects. He was born in 1806 in Nürnberg, Germany, and died there in 1894. He studied art in Düsseldorf and Munich before going to Switzerland in 1825, where he stayed for 20 years. He resided in Thun from 1834 to 1845 and exhibited landscape paintings in Bern and Zürich before migrating to the United States in 1845. He settled in St. Louis, where he was an evangelical pastor and schoolteacher; this is where he met the eminent botanist George Engelmann. After serving in the Civil War, Roetter became an associate of Louis Agassiz (1835–1910) at Harvard in 1867. Later Roetter taught at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, and participated in government expeditions.

George Engelmann chose the very talented Roetter for the enormous task of making the illustrations for William Hemsley Emory's Report of the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey (1859), which included the celebrated Cactaceae of the Boundary. It contains 76 magnificent steel engravings of cacti, the finest ever produced. In recognition of Roetter's exemplary service, Engelmann named Cereus roetteri (now Echinocereus roetteri) in his honor. To the description he added: "I take great pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to the modest and faithful artist, Mr. Paulus Roetter who has adorned this memoir by his skillful pencil, by naming this species after him."

Cactaceae of the Boundary included the famous frontispiece "View of the Gila River" that depicts Native Americans among giant saguaros. Roetter based his drawing for this plate on a sketch by German painter and author Balduin Mollhausen, the artist of the Gadsden territory expedition.

Larry W. Mitich