

Urban Forest: Images of Trees in the Human Landscape (Sierra Club Books Publication)



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Beyond their aesthetic and utilitarian importance, urban trees seem to fill a deeper human need. Perhaps they are reminders of the inexorable cycles of the natural world. Perhaps they serve as eddies and rills of slowness and sureness within the frantic rush of our urban environment. For more than two decades, photographer David Paul Bayles has been making images of trees in cities and suburbs - places of tension, as he puts it, between 'what we build and what we grow'. This beautifully designed and produced volume showcases his extraordinary vision of urban trees and their often precarious, sometimes triumphant place in the human landscape.Initially drawn to his subject by 'the balance and harmony and beauty between the manmade structure and the tree', Bayles has also found and photographed plenty of imbalance and human folly along the way. His images are laconic, almost deadpan, yet at the same time infused with irony, humor, and compassion. They avoid the easy trap of politicization, allowing and encouraging each of us to see the relationship between humankind and trees - in all of its complexity - for ourselves. This much is certain: Those who delve into the pages of this remarkable book will never again look at the trees around them in quite the same way.

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