



The Pleasure Garden, from Vauxhall to Coney Island (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture)

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Summers at the Vauxhall pleasure garden in London brought diverse entertainments to a diverse public. Picturesque walks and arbors offered a pastoral retreat from the city, while at the same time the garden's attractions indulged distinctly urban tastes for fashion, novelty, and sociability. High- and low-born alike were free to walk the paths; the proximity to strangers and the danger of dark walks were as thrilling to visitors as the fountains and fireworks. Vauxhall was the venue that made the careers of composers, inspired novelists, and showcased the work of artists. Scoundrels, sudden downpours, and extortionate ham prices notwithstanding, Vauxhall became a must-see destination for both Londoners and tourists. Before long, there were Vauxhalls across Britain and America, from York to New York, Norwich to New Orleans.

This edited volume provides the first book-length study of the attractions and interactions of the pleasure garden, from the opening of Vauxhall in the seventeenth century to the amusement parks of the early twentieth. Nine essays explore the mutual influences of human behavior and design: landscape, painting, sculpture, and even transient elements such as lighting and music tacitly informed visitors how to move within the space, what to wear, how to behave, and where they might transgress. *The Pleasure Garden, from Vauxhall to Coney Island* draws together the work of musicologists, art historians, and scholars of urban studies and landscape design to unfold a cultural history of pleasure gardens, from the entertainments they offered to the anxieties of social difference they provoked.



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