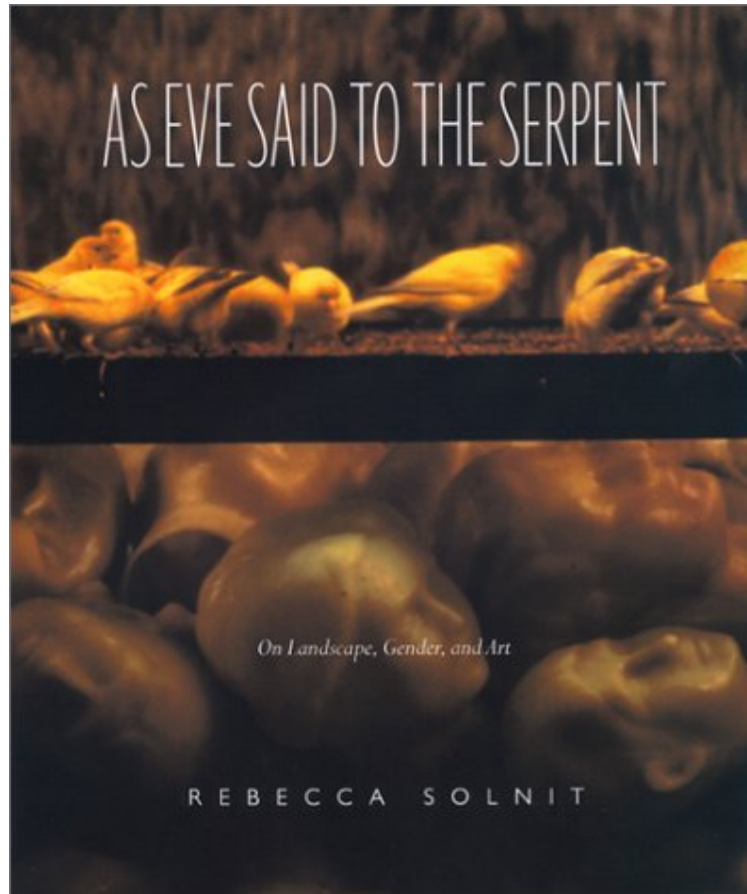


(Free) As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art

As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art

Rebecca Solnit

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Rebecca Solnit : As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art*:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. InspiringBy MEJBeautifully written and engaging from the start, I was inspired by Rebecca Solnit's book to look again at landscape photography and to go out with my camera. She writes with an easy, unpretentious style, avoiding the didactic proselytising that makes some art and literary critiques so dreary. I look forward to reading more by her.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Scholarly, Friendly, Enlightening, FunBy IShouldBePaintingThere aren't that many books that include "Gender" in the title where you don't feel like you are being hit over the head with feminism. THIS IS ONE. This is a sweet book, like a first walk through a magic forest, where everything is there for you to see through new eyes. Life should be savored via many viewpoints, and this just added to my set.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. thoughtful bookBy reading in CTAs an environmentalist and artist who studies nature, I love this book. Solnit subtly shifts the landscape paradigm into a contemporary focus by re examining the past.

To Rebecca Solnit, the word "landscape" implies not only literal places, but also the ground on which we invent our lives and confront our innermost troubles and desires. The organic world, to Solnit, gives rise to the social, political, and philosophical landscapes we inhabit. As Eve Said to the Serpent skillfully weaves the natural world with the realm of art's history, techniques, and criticism to offer a remarkable compendium of Solnit's research and ruminations. The nineteen pieces in this book range from the intellectual formality of traditional art criticism to highly personal, lyrical meditations. All are distinguished by Solnit's vivid, original style that blends imaginative associations with penetrating insights. These thoughts produce quirky, intelligent, and wryly humorous content as Solnit ranges across disciplines to explore nuclear test sites, the meaning of national borders, deserts, clouds, and caves as well as ideas of the feminine and the sublime as they relate to our physical and psychological terrains. Sixty images throughout the book display the work of the contemporary artists under discussion, including landscape photographers, performance artists, sculptors, and installation artists. Alongside her text, Solnit's gallery of images provides a vivid excursion into new ways of perceiving landscape, bodies, and art. Animals and the human body appear together with space and terra firma as Solnit reconfigures the blurred lines that define nature.

From Publishers Weekly Invoking Hannah Arendt's observation, "Metaphors are the means by which the oneness of the world is poetically brought about," Solnit launches into a mangle of cultural and political criticism in these 19 essays (many previously published). But Solnit doesn't tarry long on easy targets, diving instead into political thickets, guided by the preoccupation with environmentalism and social justice that has informed her previous books (the highly praised *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* and *The Hollow City* were both published within the last year). Here, she addresses subjects like the myth of Eden; the politics and aesthetics of nature photography and calendars; interconnections between the WWII-era nuclear physicists' frequent walks and the hydrogen bomb; the metaphoric significance of natural history museums; and the meaning, for women, of the "deadly" Medusa myth. While her frame of reference encompasses political, academic and historical territories, Solnit's foremost theme prevails: the tensions between human quests for "civilization" and for nourishment in nature. Neatly balancing reportage, critical opinion and literary metaphor, Solnit standing clear-eyed on the shoulders of Walter Benjamin, Kristeva, Rachel Carson and many others attempts a bold, critical synthesis that, if occasionally unequal to its lofty goals, always provokes and challenges. Solnit's important contribution to contemporary feminist and environmental literature, as well as social and art criticism, is equally crucial for ushering "real-world" environmental politics fully and thoughtfully into the ivory tower. Photos. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal In this diverse and intelligent collection, Solnit (*Wanderlust*) gathers 18 examples of her ongoing investigation of art, landscape, feminism, and the importance of how we relate to the places in which we live. Her counterintuitive attitude is always in the foreground. Here, it frames the thinking behind this book: "I always thought Eve and the serpent must have conversed at greater length than Genesis records," she writes. And that imagined conversation, of which Eve was an active part, is Solnit's inspiration for looking at the world with an eye toward complexity. Thus, she interweaves ideas about physics, walking, the difference between nature photography and landscape photography, and much more with discussion of a number of artists (Richard Misrach, Robert Dawson, and Petah Coyne, to name only a few) to make a challenging but rewarding whole. Though most of these pieces have been published before, their appearances were scattered in magazines and in art books; to have them together offers an excellent vantage point from which to examine and enjoy the thinking of this maverick. Recommended for all art collections. Rebecca Miller, "Library Journal" Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist As a child, Solnit loved both the countryside and the library, places of contemplation that inspired her deep fascination with the relationship between nature and culture. The author of the best-selling *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* [BKL Mr 15 00], Solnit is an environmental activist and an art critic drawn to the work of innovative contemporary artists engaged in exploring the representation of landscape in the nuclear age. In 19 far-reaching essays, Solnit equates the making of the atom bomb with the biblical expulsion from paradise, a searing vision that drives her astute aesthetic and philosophical responses to the work of various performance and site-specific artists, photographers such as Richard Misrach who subvert traditional landscape images, and, in one of her most piquant performances, nature calendars that reduce wilderness scenes to the equivalent of pin-ups. Solnit's graceful and trenchant inquiries into our perceptions of nature, women, art, and technology explicate both our nostalgia for lost wilderness and our painfully slow shift from "a mechanical to an ecological worldview." Donna Seaman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved