

GREENSWARD

Cole Swensen

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Greensward looks at the interaction between animals, humans, and gardens. Often playful, it explores the question of whether animals other than humans have an aesthetic sense, posits that they do, and suggests that they develop it through watching humans garden.

The short sections of poetry and prose, sometimes plainspoken, sometimes poised precariously on the line between sense and non-sense, are dovetailed into engravings of 18th century gardens by the artist John Roque.

Graphic artist Shari DeGraw and poet Cole Swensen collaborated on excerpting elements from the garden maps and playing with scale and patterning to create a conversation between the visual and verbal elements. Two well-known 18th century garden designers also make cameo appearances, giving the text a historical sweep from the heyday of the English landscape garden to the present.

Cole Swensen is the author of twelve volumes of poetry, most recently *Ours* (University of California Press, 2008) and *The Glass Age* (Alice James Books, 2007). She is the co-editor with David St. John of the recent Norton anthology *American Hybrid* and a translator of contemporary French poetry, prose, and art criticism. She is the founder and editor of *La Presse*, a small press dedicated to experimental French poetry translated by English-language poets, and the co-director of the annual Reid Hall Translation Seminar in Paris. She was the writer-in-residence at Yale's Beinecke Library in 2007-2008, where the project *Greensward* was conceived and written. She has served as a visiting writer at Brown University and Grinnell College, and is on the permanent faculty of the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

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