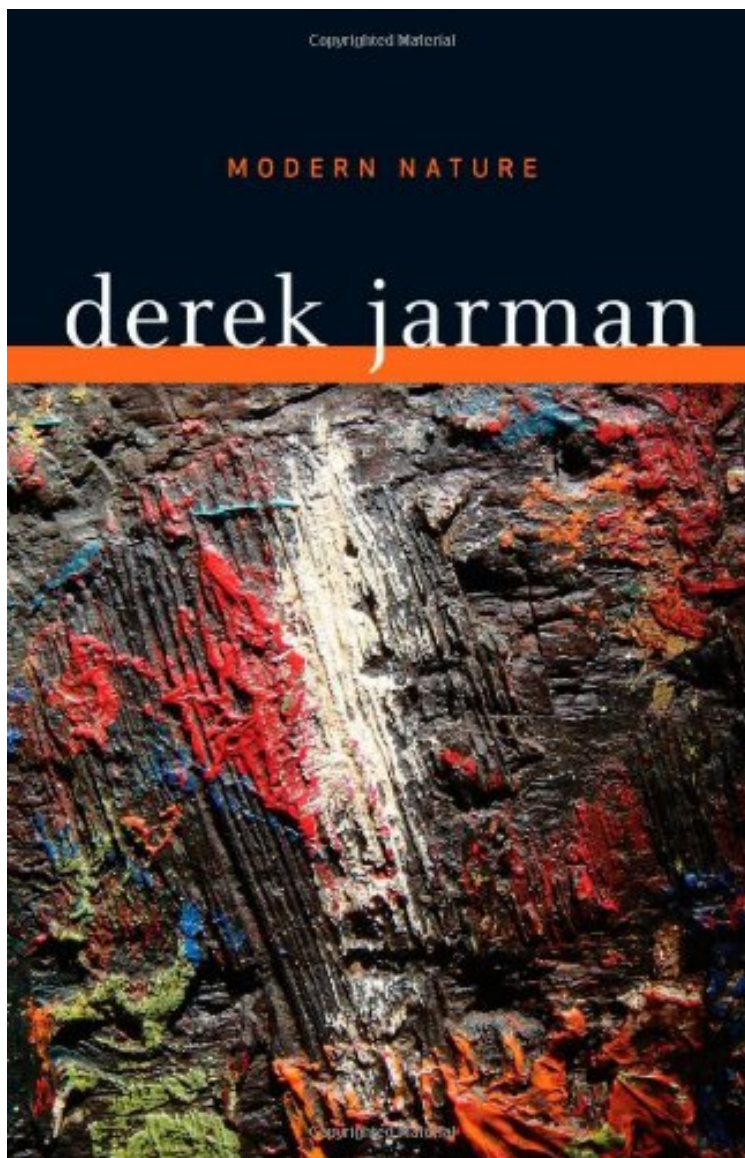


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Modern Nature

Derek Jarman

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#2277492 in Books Univ Of Minnesota Press 2009-10-05Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .80 x 5.50l, .85 #File Name: 081666594X320 pages | File size: 15.Mb

Derek Jarman : Modern Nature before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Modern Nature:

This text is the iconoclastic and controversial filmmaker Derek Jarman's candid journals from 1989 to 1990. The journals include Jarman's love of gardening and flowers while he was growing sicker from AIDS.

From Publishers Weekly: Fans of British filmmaker Jarman's *Caravaggio* and *Wittgenstein*, as well as students of gay life, may enjoy these journal excerpts; others will find them too obscure. The third of Jarman's memoirs (following *At Your Own Risk* and *Dancing Ledge*) covers the years 1989 and 1990, during which he struggles to keep working despite his status as publicly HIV-positive, and he reflects on life, sensuality and the beauty of nature. He writes sensitive, observant prose, though the book's fragmentary style sometimes vitiates its power. Nevertheless, Jarman offers resonant passages on the tragedy of the AIDS era, how the "heterosexuality of everyday life enveloped and asphyxiated me," and how, ultimately, despite being what some see as "a 'guilty victim' of the scourge, I want to bear witness how happy I am, and will be until the day I die, that I was part of the hated sexual revolution." He ends with parallel catalogues of the constants in his life: the flowers from his garden and the prescriptions from his pharmacy. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From *Library Journal*: Controversial British filmmaker Jarman's third published journal more than matches the extraordinary quality of *Dancing Ledge* (LJ 5/15/93) and *At Your Own Risk* (LJ 12/92). This memoir covers 1989 and 1990. Diagnosed as HIV-positive four years earlier, Jarman tells of how he occupied himself with his garden at a cottage on the coast of Dungeness. Mixed with his descriptions of planting are fascinating bits of plant and flower lore. The author looks back to his childhood and the schools of the 1960s--as they actually were, instead of how the current nostalgia craze paints them. Candid, critical, and moving, Jarman uses words as skillfully as he does images in film, to evoke a scene or make a point. Though the abrupt ending leaves the reader hanging, this is a rare and marvelous book. Highly recommended. - Marianne Cawley, Kingwood Branch Lib., Tex. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From *Kirkus*: sGay British filmmaker Jarman, who was diagnosed HIV-positive in 1986, follows up his cannon-blast memoir *At Your Own Risk* (1992) and his memoir of "my Queerlife," *Dancing Ledge* (p. 505), with his 1989-90 diary of his days fighting his demons while facing the prospect of full-blown AIDS. The diary's overall theme is that of Jarman's illness and what he's doing about it. He begins filming *The Garden*--a kind of gay Garden of Gethsemane story set in the exquisitely kept (or at least exquisitely described) garden he tends at his coastal cottage at bleak Dungeness. Now and then, the diary looks back frankly at his youth, then at his now-faded love life, or rather sex life, since his friend Howard still lavishes much care and love on him throughout. What there's no getting around here is the immense "footage" Jarman gives to his garden, with page after page of silverpoint about his plants and flowers--growths that for most readers will register as totally unfamiliar. But no matter: It's Jarman's tie to his garden that counts--how it invigorates him, though temporary illnesses strike, including bronchitis and blindness. His film *War Requiem* is a bust, lasting but one week in New York before being pulled. His first week's rushes on *The Garden* are glaringly bad, "out-of-focus shots, shots that fall like confetti. 16mm deadly, with no resonance. There is not a shot that is not ugly." When he finally begins taking AZT, the results aren't much better. Then the New York Film Festival turns down *The Garden*. Even so, "I want to bear witness how happy I am, and will be until the day I die, that I was part of the hated sexual revolution; and that I don't regret a single step or encounter I made in that time...." Courageous stuff, often very well written. (Nineteen bw photographs) -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.