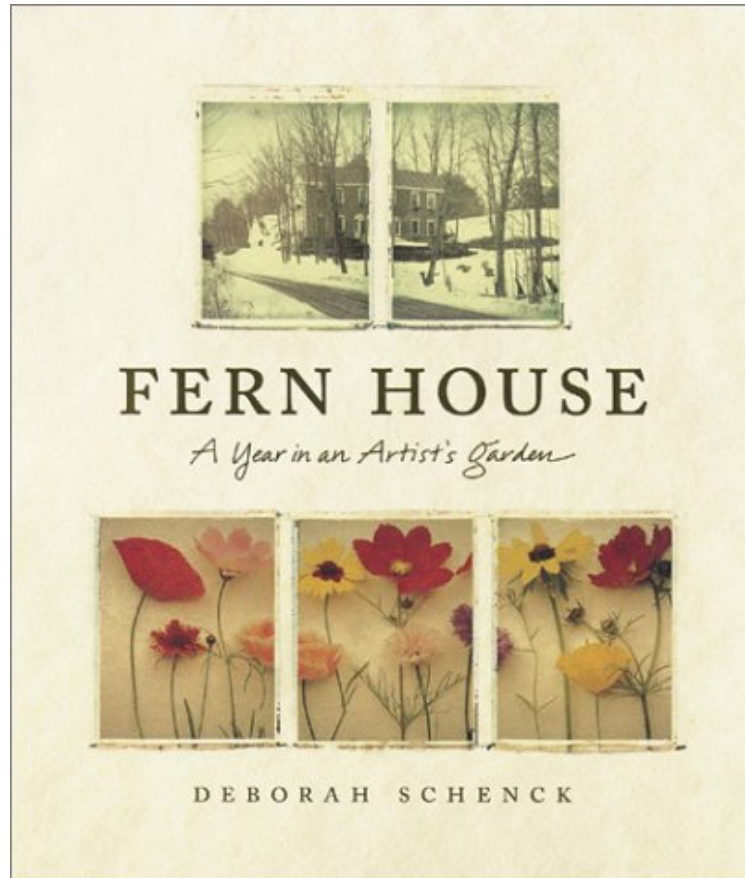


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Fern House: A Year in an Artist's Garden

Deborah Schenck, Lauri Berkenkamp

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Deborah Schenck, Lauri Berkenkamp : Fern House: A Year in an Artist's Garden before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fern House: A Year in an Artist's Garden:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Every Human Sense is Stimulated and Challenged By Story Circle Book Reviews Deborah Schenck was born in England. Surrounded by country gardens for much of her life, she promised herself that one day she would have a garden of her own. A photographer since her college years, she has spent much of her adult life capturing the gifts of nature on film. Lauri Berkenkamp has written for magazines and newspapers throughout the United States and is the author of several books. Like Schenck, she resides in Vermont. In Fern House, she works with Schenck's thoughts, artwork and photographs to provide a reflective and quiet journey through the gardens and the seasons. The 19th century home in Vermont provides the perfect environment to showcase Schenck's love of gardens. Fern House is a journal in words and pictures of the first year in the old home. Readers catch a glimpse of the garden complete with weeds as well as colorful blooms during each of the four seasons. Schenck's illustrations and photographs are able to transplant the reader to the starkness of winter, the muddy Vermont spring, the bountiful summer, and the autumn kissed trees and flowers of fall. Not only does she portray the contents of her garden with vivid, pleasing-to-the-senses detail, but she somehow manages to allow the reader to

actually experience the season right along with her and her garden. Every human sense is stimulated and challenged while reading this unique book. It is impossible to turn the page without smelling the "heady scent of lilac bushes" or the fresh mint from the herb garden. I challenge the reader to not feel the autumn air or the summer's warmth. Listening through the book brings the sounds of native birds, the relaxing flow of water at the pond, and the crunch of fresh snow. Colors and textures leap off the page. Because I have lived in Southwest Florida for nearly thirty years, I have on more than one occasion been heard to announce how much my soul longs for the change of seasons. Reading this book, savoring the descriptions and visual delights were a true gift to my soul. I came away from the reading experience feeling refreshed, renewed and in awe of nature's hold on our souls. It was the closest thing to really being "in" the seasonal changes as I have been in quite some time. Come along with me as I highlight a favorite passage from each of the four seasons in Schenck's garden. Winter: "The maples that line our garden remind me of old women dancing. They bow and swar and whisper to the paper birches that flank them as the wind blows through their bare branches." Spring: "Spring seems to blossom overnight. Every morning I wake to find the world a bit greener than the day before. The apple trees are now in full bloom, their branches all but hidden under a canopy of pink and white. When the wind blows, showers of sweet-smelling petals drift in the air." Summer: "Daisies and black-eyed susans are happy travelers, popping up everywhere where there is lots of sun. Originally prairie flowers, they are a cheerful reminder that no matter how carefully I plan my garden, Mother Nature has her own ideas about where flowers should bloom." Autumn: "We have put the gardens to bed with a feeling just short of regret--I'm ready to spend less time gardening for now, but I have so enjoyed this summer that it's hard for me to let it go." Whether you are a gardener, a photographer, a journaler, or of other creative mind, this book is one to treasure and to re-read any time your soul longs to be reminded of the beauty of nature and the wonder of the seasons. by Lee Ambrose for Story Circle Book Reviews reviewing books by, for, and about women 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent photos and text! By Snow Lover Both the photographer and writer successfully transport you to the dreamy world of Fern House throughout the year. Evoking glimpses of the tranquil lifestyle so many people associate with Vermont, it is a beautiful book, both to keep AND to give!

At last, best-selling photographer Deborah Schenck brings her exquisite images to book form. Through her eyes we discover the pleasure found in creating a luxurious garden set against the backdrop of her nineteenth century home in Vermont. Leafing through this extraordinary journal is like watching from a window a forgotten, overgrown patch of land transform into a lush, verdant paradise. She captures with elegance and artistry the seasons, the landscape, and the intimate details of the flora and fauna. Through her signature Polaroid transfers and enchanting illustrations, we see the single, crystallized moments and elements that make gardening a timeless, life-affirming activity. These images, paired with writing on the rewards of time spent with hands in the earth, prove that fertile soil and a fertile imagination create the most exquisite of gardens--and books. Richly evocative, wonderfully inviting, and thoroughly charming, Fern House is a delight for both gardeners and artists alike.

.com Moving into a 19th-century federal brick house in Vermont, artist Deborah Schenck decided to re-create the luxurious English country gardens of her youth at her new home. Through the first year at Fern House, Schenck documented the growth and transformation of her home, gardens, and family. Fern House simply and beautifully illustrates this progression. Surrounded by dozens of types of ferns (including horsetail, lace-leaf, and the edible fiddlehead), Fern House was just the kind of place Schenck was looking for to settle down in and join a small community. The birth of her second child, coupled with this new home, inspired her to keep a visual journal of the changes during this very special year--and it helped her to balance the daily joys and challenges of motherhood with her artistic passions. "My artwork celebrates the importance of a single image--the portrait that holds all the perfume, color, and detail of the garden in one perfect bloom," she says. "They are quiet images, and they invite people to slow down, to focus and contemplate the small but important details of our world that are so often overlooked." Schenck's images are lovely. Their composition is meticulously planned but appears beautifully natural. She often uses a triptych or paneled approach, creating groups of a series of bright red summer blooms or russet, brown, and gold autumn leaves and nuts. Fern House is a sensuous and charming pleasure that makes you feel that you are taking a moment to relax in a cool, mossy grotto or next to a koi-filled pond. The text, written by Lauri Berkenkamp, is quietly poetic and captures the graceful elegance of Schenck's images. --Dana Van Nest About the Author Deborah Schenck was born and raised in England surrounded by country gardens. She now lives in Vermont. Lauri Berkenkamp is a writer whose work has appeared widely in magazines and newspapers. She lives in Vermont.