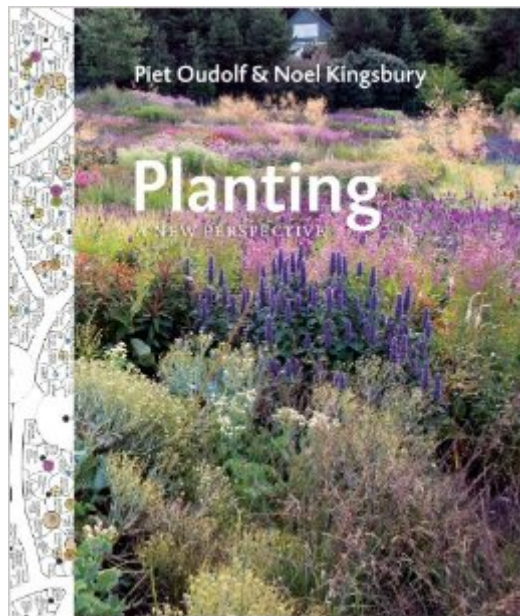


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# Planting: A New Perspective



## Synopsis

Planting: A New Perspective is an essential resource for designers and gardeners looking to create plant-rich, beautiful gardens that support biodiversity and nourish the human spirit. An intimate knowledge of plants is essential to the success of modern landscape design, and Planting makes Oudolf's considerable understanding of plant ecology and performance accessible, explaining how plants behave in different situations, what goes on underground, and which species make good neighbors. Extensive plant charts and planting plans will help you choose plants for their structure, color, and texture as well as the way they perform in the landscape. A detailed directory with details like each plant's life expectancy, the persistence of its seedheads, its tendency to spread, and propensity to self-seed, this book is a beautiful and invaluable resource.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Noel Kingsbury is the great chronicler of contemporary planting design. Kingsbury is the most articulate and prolific writer on contemporary naturalism. I'm always eager to get his latest book. Last week, I was received Planting: A New Perspective. Someone had described it to me as "Oudolf made accessible for the residential gardener." Something about this description made me cringe. I'm not sure I could stand an Oudolf for Dummies--a stripped down version of Oudolf that would make every common landscaper capable of thoughtlessly replicating the Oudolf style. The idea of a simplified book also felt wrong. There were still so many questions left unanswered by Planting Design: what defines the "new style"? What role do native plant communities play in this style? Is it

really possible to create a low maintenance, long-lasting version of the new style? Let's be clear: this book is not Oudolf for Dummies. And thank God for that. Any review that describes this simply as "Oudolf for home gardeners" has clearly not read beyond the dust jacket. More than any of Oudolf/Kingsbury's collaborations, *Planting* establishes the "new style" as a potent artistic and intellectual movement. This book has real meat. The liberal use of Oudolf's planting plans are reason alone to buy this book. For the designer or gardener, these hand sketches are a Rosetta stone for understanding Oudolf's process. This book delves deeply into compositional strategy: how are plants grouped, layered, and mixed based upon their unique structures and ecologies? Kingsbury's recent doctoral work at Sheffield clearly comes through in the brilliantly explicated sections of perennial's lifespans and competitive strategies.

I was disappointed in this book. True, there are some lovely photographs of the High Line, the Lurie Garden and other projects. There is a reasonable, albeit long-winded, discussion of designing a garden to mimic nature, but the production values are wanting, which is surprising because I have many books from Timber Press. The author makes reference to many plants that are not listed or described in the book, the plant is only included in a large garden dominated by grasses. I had to guess what plant he was describing. In some cases, I wrote down the name of the plant to look for it on the internet. At the back of the book there is a plant list, divided into three categories: perennials, grasses and ferns. There are no photographs of most of the plants listed; there is a schedule, similar to a spread sheet, which attempts to describe the plant. In this section of the book, the photographs of the individual plants vary greatly by quality; some are out of focus, some show flowers and no leaves, some show leaves and no flowers, most were not in scale. I had the impression that the photos were just lying around and were not taken specifically for this book. It seemed odd that there were photographs of the most common plants but no photographs of lesser known and rarer plants. The author includes many diagrams of the plant designs of many, many gardens, including block-by-block patches of the High Line. While of interest, this is over-kill and the pages would be better used to show the plants described in the gardens. Lastly, there was a sameness to the gardens featured in the book; this sameness encouraged me to study the photographs with great care.

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