This book offers a new look at the Belgian capital’s landscape by highlighting, through a richly illustrated panorama – ranging from the eighteenth century to the present day –, the unique history of its public parks and gardens as well as of its green infrastructure. Focused on public spaces, the book enables a new reading of these everyday sites which visitors sometimes pass through distractedly, without always deciphering their style, period or raison d’être. The creators of these landscape designs, often left in the shadows of history, are also honoured, as the volume seeks to show that far from being the result of chance or nature, these spatial designs are artistic creations in their own right. Lastly, by placing these works in an international context, the book shows how much the Brussels region has been, throughout history, at the crossroads of various influences that have contributed in a decisive way to shaping its character.
LA NATURE ET LA CULTURE TERRITORIALE

...
Edited by Eric Hennaut and Ursula Wieser Benedetti, the book combines in-house contributions from the CIVA with newly commissioned texts by ten authors from Belgium and abroad who specialize in a range of fields that enable us to approach the subject from different angles: historian, art historian, landscape architect, urban planner, geographer, botanist... The book attempts both to outline the specificities of landscape architecture in the Brussels region and to situate it within an international cultural framework. The book has also been conceived as an original visual journey through two and a half centuries of landscape architecture. The iconography is mainly based on period documents, some of which have never been published before. The wide variety of sources available in this area – plans, sketches, prints, old photographs, paintings, porcelains, sculpture models – enables us to follow in meticulous detail the creative design process of each era. The documents come from the CIVA archives as well as from many public and private collections in Brussels and Belgium (National Archives of Belgium, Archives of the Royal Palace, Archives of the City of Brussels, Brussels City Museum, Royal Museums of Art and History, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, municipal archives, private archives of landscape architects).
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