



Creating Central Park (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Morrison H. Heckscher

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The year 2008 marks the 150th anniversary of the design of Central Park, the first and arguably the most famous of America's urban landscape parks. In October 1857 the new park's board of commissioners announced a public design competition, and the following April the imaginative yet practicable "Greensward" plan submitted by Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted was selected.

This book tells the fascinating story of how an extraordinary work of public art emerged from the crucible of New York City politics. From William Cullen Bryant's 1844 editorial calling for "a pleasure ground of shade and recreation" to the completion of construction in 1870, the history of Central Park is an urban epic—a tale not only of animosity, political intrigue, and desire but also of idealism, sacrifice, and genius.

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