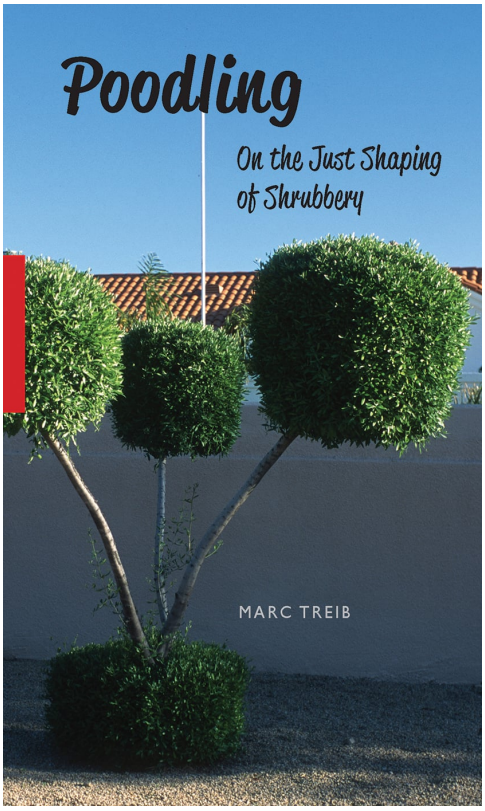
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Poodling

On the Just Shaping of Shrubbery

Marc Treib

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- Topiary shears shrubs into a singular form geometric or figure; poodling, in contrast, treats each branch individually and shapes its leaves or needles into the forms that remain at their ends

Poodling is a vernacular approach to pruning shrubbery: a negotiation between gardener and shrub that pits human aesthetic intention against the genetic forces that guide the plant's natural development. Topiary shears shrubs into a singular form geometric or figure; poodling, in contrast, treats each branch individually and shapes its leaves or needles into the forms that remain at their ends.
In this informed, if light-hearted, telling of the story, noted landscape historian Marc Treib traces the evolution and characteristics of topiary, espalier, and other forms of plant guidance such as poodling, proposing that what began as functional horticultural practices was transformed into a vehicle for artistic expression. ***Poodling*** catalogues the forms of pruning we encounter today and their probable origin in Japan during the 18th century. Noting the parallels, he compares the forms of poodling (vegetal) with those of the canine species poodle (animal), and the manners by which the dog's hair has been clipped. Richly illustrated with photographs by the author taken in many countries over three decades, this is an informative book that everyone can enjoy.

Marc Treib, Professor of Architecture Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, is a noted historian and critic of landscape design and architecture who has published widely on modern and historical subjects in the United States, Japan, and Scandinavia. He has been the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards and is an honorary member of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

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