



The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees

By Stephanie Kaza



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A Buddhist and environmentalist carries her appreciation of trees beyond simple nature study or poeticism with twenty-seven evocative, thought-provoking meditations. Included are twenty-seven original lithographs.

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The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees By Stephanie Kaza Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Readers who feel a kinship with trees will be captivated by these "conversations." Now a professor of environmental studies at the University of Vermont, Kaza bases most of these meditative essays on experiences she had in California. With a Buddhist reverence for living things, she follows the Zen practice of shikantaza --just sitting--to find serenity and inspiration among trees. She observes the change of seasons with a stately ginkgo, re-visits a commune to renew her acquaintance with a tan oak and madrone, dreams as she leans against a massive blue oak. On Arbor Day, Kaza joins a group planting redwood seedlings; she makes a pilgrimage to Methuselah Grove to see bristlecone pines and to Yosemite for whitebark pines. Other encounters include red firs, alders and sycamores. This is a beautifully written, imaginative appreciation of trees. Illustrations. First serial to New Age Journal; QPB alternate.

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From Library Journal

This book records a series of the author's intensely personal, sometimes spiritual, relationships with individual trees. Her approach is based on her experience as a practitioner of Zen meditation techniques. Kaza's training as a naturalist, however, gives her essays a more realistic bent; she recognizes the many uses of wood as a raw material--for paper, furniture, fuel, lumber, etc.--and does not dismiss the human uses of trees as an evil. Her descriptions of the trees and the life around them and in them are accurate and lyrical, although the writing is almost too poetic and intense in spots. This is not a book to be read straight through; it should be dipped into at reflective moments, like a book of poems. Notes in the back constitute a bibliography of sorts. Recommended for environmental collections.

- *Eleanor Maass, Maass As socs., New Milford, Pa.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Twenty-seven lyrical, beautifully illustrated essays about communing with trees. Kaza (Environmental Studies/University of Vermont) tries to marry deep ecology with the "Mountains and Rivers Sutra" of the ninth-century Japanese Zen master Eihei Dogen. Like the sutra, the book progresses in five sections, beginning with the "simple desire to meet trees and make contact" to the desire to "uncover more complete histories of individual trees," as well as to "experience a certain vulnerability in raising difficult questions" about life and death among trees and humans; then going, third, through an entering into the sufferings of trees and on, fourth, to a response in ways that "are heartfelt and genuine" and that "aim for greater capacity in approaching the very demanding situation of trees today"; and, lastly, taking up a search for ways "to restore spiritual as well as biological relationships with trees...." Kaza is deeply serious as she strives for the heartfelt in trees growing up the Coast Ranges of central California, and in Washington, Oregon, and the Sierra Nevada. She fights TV and nature movies that offer "delusional substitutes for rich, sensory contact with the actual rhythms and textures of the natural world" (an argument very similar to Bill McKibben's in *The Age of Missing Information*, 1992). Hers are one-sided conversations: The redwoods, alders, maples, and oaks don't answer back. But we get many wonderful moments down in the drinking roots of sycamores; up in the spring ecstasy of pollinating maples; sitting in the still wisdom of caves; and watching a nervous Kaza, with a diamond mind and chain saw, cutting firewood that she praises. Too talky at times, but readers who stay will be rich winners. Could achieve a cult following. (Twenty-seven lithographs by Davis Teselle) (First serial to New Age Journal) -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Martha Albarado:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive currently, people have to do something to make these people survive, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice through surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated that for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a reserve your ability to survive raise then having chance to stand than other is high. In your case who want to start reading a new book, we give you this specific The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees book as nice and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Aubrey Newsome:

The experience that you get from The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees is a more deep you looking the information that hide in the words the more you get serious about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to be aware of but The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by simply anyone who read it because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees instantly.

Tom Rivera:

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