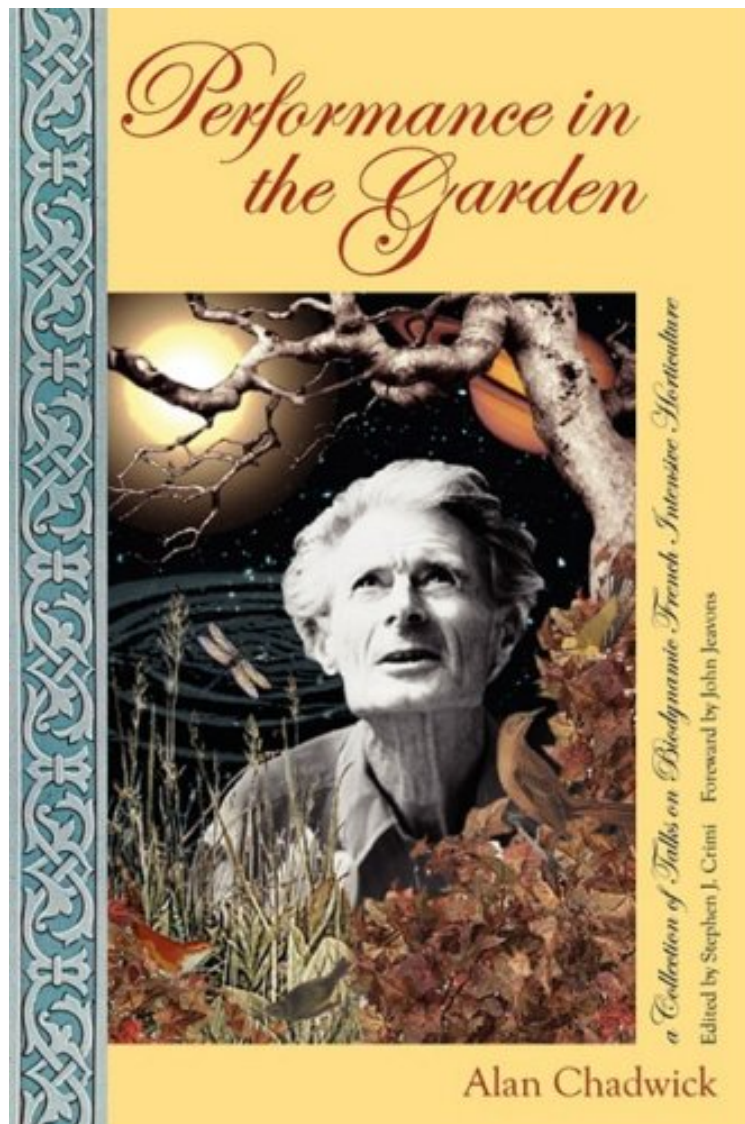


(Mobile book) Performance in the Garden: A Collection of Talks on Biodynamic French Intensive Horticulture

Performance in the Garden: A Collection of Talks on Biodynamic French Intensive Horticulture

Alan Chadwick

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Alan Chadwick : Performance in the Garden: A Collection of Talks on Biodynamic French Intensive Horticulture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Performance in the Garden: A Collection of Talks on Biodynamic French Intensive Horticulture:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A glimpse into the mind of a legendary geniusBy Dale Miller"There

is nothing that cannot come out of paradise." --Alan Chadwick

I first came under the spell of Alan Chadwick around 30 years ago. Like most Americans who have heard about Chadwick, my introduction came via the work of John Jeavons, author of *How to Grow More Vegetables*. Jeavons was a systems analyst at Stanford University in the 70s and an eco-activist when he learned about the extraordinary gardens created by Chadwick and his students on the campus of the University of California at nearby Santa Cruz. Like countless others, he was entranced by the power emanating from this larger-than-life figure and the message he bore. In Chadwick's Biodynamic French intensive method, Jeavons saw one answer to the problems of hunger in a world of diminishing resources and ballooning population. And he incorporated many of Chadwick's techniques in the demonstration gardens maintained by Ecology Action, a nonprofit group. (The system that grew out of this initiative has further evolved and is now called GROW BIOINTENSIVE). In 1980 I planned a trip to California to visit Jeavons' research and demonstration plots at Ecology Action in Palo Alto. The night before my plane was scheduled to depart, I read in *Organic Gardening* magazine that the computer company that had donated use of the land had reclaimed it for a parking lot (Yes, Joni Mitchell, they paved paradise). I caught my flight just the same, happy to escape the bleak Michigan winter and hopeful of finding something else worthy of a gardening enthusiast's attention. Sure enough, Ecology Action still maintained a storefront on El Camino Real in Palo Alto. Here seeds, books and tools were available, and John Jeavons gave free workshops on Saturday mornings. From the Ecology Action volunteers, I learned of a nearby garden project in Saratoga. The Saratoga Community Garden (now defunct) had been designed and launched by Alan Chadwick, at the request of parents in the community, as an educational resource for school children. I spent two weeks at Saratoga, my first exposure to an actual garden created according to principles laid down by Chadwick before his death in 1980. My appetite was whetted, and over the next few years I spent a total of six weeks attending workshops taught by Chadwick apprentices at John Denver's Windstar Foundation in Colorado and the Mother Earth News Eco-Village in North Carolina. From them I learned the basics of Biodynamic French Intensive gardening. It was clear from the stories shared by his apprentices and others that Chadwick was an extraordinary human being. He was a Renaissance man in the truest sense--Shakespearean actor by profession, painter, violinist, classical scholar and, in the words of E. F. Schumacher, "the greatest horticulturist of the 20th century." In the years that followed, I searched for more information about Chadwick. I met and talked with numerous young people who had apprenticed with him in California and Virginia. I was fortunate enough to view the PBS documentary "Garden Song" (still available), and the videotaped interview "Alan Chadwick: Portrait of a Master Horticulturalist," (National Portrait Gallery), which is unfortunately no longer available. But since Chadwick believed in passing on his legacy orally rather than in books, there was scarcely any written record of his remarkable career. Imagine my delight, then, to learn of this collection of transcribed lectures, delivered to apprentices at Chadwick's last garden in Carmel-by-the-Sea, Virginia. These lectures cover the main topics of Chadwick's philosophy: the rhythm of the seasons and the influences of cosmic forces emanating from the moon and stars and planets, soil fertility, cultivation, propagation, the role of herbs. Transcribed directly from recorded lectures, this is not always easy reading. Chadwick's speaking style was wonderfully evocative, as one might expect from an artist who spent a lifetime on the stage. But it can leave the reader puzzled. Do not expect hard-edge technical explanations; instead let yourself be carried away by the power of Chadwick's boundless imagination and knowledge, not only of horticulture, but also history, art, the classics, cosmology. I found that the lectures clarified and amplified some points I had learned from Chadwick's apprentices: they are filled with insights that can be adapted to one's own gardening practice. I was grateful, for example, for further elucidation of the concept of the "zone of discontinuity," which I had heard explained before in slightly different terms. I was gratified to hear Chadwick reiterate the importance of freshness. "Fresh" is the most abused, profaned word in the lexicon of food marketing. Nothing you will ever buy at a supermarket is ever fresh. Most of it has been shipped thousands of miles, losing flavor and nutrition along the way. This fact is too often forgotten even by advocates of healthy eating, who sometimes appear to equate a carrot picked fresh from the garden with one shipped from thousands of miles away. There is a brief glossary of terms like *revolutionibus*, a Copernican concept which means something like the sum total of all the cosmic forces at work in the universe. For me, this book is a rare treasure. It rekindled the inspiration I felt on first learning about Chadwick's teaching, and it sent me out into my own garden with a fresh vision and newly awakened spirit. For those readers meeting this legendary genius for the first time, I hope it will do the same.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Non-dualism in the Garden! By Robert Greenway OK, there's Perma-Culture, and "Deep Ecology", "ecopsychology" and all sorts of other hopeful strategies for resolving "the environmental crisis" flying around. Here's another, that is rooted in Goethe and the Vitalists, right through Rudolph Steiner, through Waldorf Schools, and into the famed biodynamic gardens of Round Valley in Northern California, and UC/Santa Cruz. It's about Alan Chadwick, who brought all this into one very important edge of small-scale agriculture during the last half of the last century -- a genius, crazy guy, profound thinker, and he "double-dug" the raised beds right along with his many students. Perhaps not as "cult-like" as Perma Culture -- but just as visionary and practical -- if you want to understand the human-soil-food relationship in ways that are not dualistic. What it's like to be way into the ecology of soils and compost, germination and growth, and the harvesting of unbelievably tasteful and nutritious foods.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. If your serious about gardening By J. Baker This

was like jumping off a diving board into the depths of my garden!! The guy is brilliant and eccentric - but stay with him!! Some parts of his talks were hard for me to follow - but I was hooked on his obvious relish and delight in giving these teachings to his students. The chapters on fertility and cultivation were great - my favorite chapter was the one on bees (Ch 10). On the whole he offers an incredible, beautiful and rich understanding of plants and gardens. The book is definately worth your while... on many levels.

Gardening. Environmental Studies. E.M. Schumacher (Small Is Beautiful) called Englishman Alan Chadwick "the greatest horticulturist of the 20th century." Chadwick was a student of Rudolf Steiner, an early advocate of organics, and founder of French Intensive Biodynamic System. He railed against the tragic policies of corporate agribusiness, while cultivating gardens of sublime beauty and production in the 60s and 70s throughout the United States. Nearly everyone practicing biodynamics today has been kissed by the Chadwick transmission. Up until now his unique artistic approach and deep perception of nature were unavailable in writing. **PERFORMANCE IN THE GARDEN** harvests sixteen incredible, inspired and practical talks that will help us, as herbalist and friend Paul Lee aptly put it, "replant the vital root of existence."