

INSPIRED BY . . .



COWS . . . BY KIM WILKIE

PHOTOGRAPH: KIM WILKIE

"Cows do it for me. Looking down from Richmond Hill over the cows beside the River Thames on Petersham Meadow, I have this wonderful sense of calm sanity in a crazy city. The flood meadows have been managed like this for centuries. The cows graze the meadows that absorb the storms, slow the water and replenish the land. In turn, that (sort of) provides the food for the people who live in the surrounding dry houses, walk through the fields, and picnic among the wildflowers. A perfect example of arcadia — man in nature, not separate from it. Interestingly though, cows do not do it for the Americans. Over there, cows are a symbol of over-grazing and the destruction of wilderness. Far from keeping the land in a fine balance of wildflower meadows, they graze out the delicate flora and cause erosion and mayhem. So there you have it: one man's inspiration is another's exasperation."

*Kim Wilkie is a landscape architect based in Richmond upon Thames, Surrey.
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