Mapping London: Making Sense of the City

Simon Foxell

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Mapping London: Making Sense of the City is a beautiful, compelling anthology of over six centuries of London maps, tracing the mesmerising evolution of the city and exploring the hopes and fears of its inhabitants as history unfolds. Now released in Paperback.

The book is a cartographic journey, charting the influence of Roman city planning, Saxon feudalism, Medieval tumult, imperial hubris, contemporary town planning and more on this great metropolis. It includes over 200 maps, from literary imaginings and utopian prophecies to portrayals of London in contemporary computer games, comics and online—as well as the timeless Monopoly board.

The maps in this comprehensive survey are allowed to speak for themselves, revealing not only their political and social context, but also the dreams of their makers and the drama of their creation. The maps are often objects of great skill and beauty themselves, with the names of the greatest of their makers still revered today.

Much more is revealed by the maps than the cartographers themselves could have envisaged, they provide enthralling insights into events including the Great Fire of London, the Plague and the Industrial Revolution. The city's more recent history is also investigated, including the irrevocable change of the two World Wars and the redevelopment planned for the 2012 Olympics.

The book is split into four sections, each beginning with a short introduction and beautifully illustrated by the maps themselves: London Change and Growth; Serving the City; Living in the City; and Imagining London.

Including engaging and illuminating essays exploring the history of the maps and how they have been used for social, political and commercial purposes, *Mapping London: Making Sense of the City* is a lavishly illustrated book which explores the city through the ages in all its labyrinthine glory. Perfect both for gifts and for all those serious about maps and cartography.

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