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Architecture: From Prehistory To Post-Modernism : The Western Tradition



Synopsis

This highly regarded, consistently well-selling and extremely well-written book brings to life architectural history and its canon of great buildings through a lively approach that is both insightful and accurate. This story of architecture moves back and forth between long views of historical trends and close-ups of major works and crucial architectural themes. The authors have successfully made the subject of architectural history - which due to its technical aspects can too often be off-putting to the lay reader - transparent, engaging, and easily mastered. All buildings are illustrated with effective images that are well reproduced and thoughtfully keyed to the text. In the second edition, the content of the book has been fine-tuned and polished. Sections in the Renaissance, Baroque, and Modern chapters were reworked to include recent scholarship and, in the case of the Baroque, expand coverage to Eastern Europe. The Introduction has been significantly updated in its slant and language, including a discussion of the newly introduced term "Postmodernity." The most significant and exciting change, however, is the addition of the new chapter, which covers architectural developments from approximately 1980 to 2000. The new chapter is a challenging yet comprehensible take on the exciting, diverse, and stunning buildings from the last twenty years. Most impressively, the author creates a cohesive story from these recent buildings that are, by their very nature, extremely complex, individualistic, and difficult to categorise.

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Customer Reviews

For everyone interested in looking beyond the façade of architectural landmarks to learn about the forces that shaped them, *Architecture: From Prehistory to Postmodernity* has been a definitive resource since its publication in 1986. Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman, professors at New York University, weave complex information into an engrossing narrative. While the authors' focus is on the Western tradition, shared ancient roots inspired a chapter on aspects of Islamic architecture. In the second edition, Trachtenberg's well-supported opinions add a lively sense of engagement to a new chapter surveying major trends of the 1980s and 1990s (work by Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, and others). Among the special delights of the book are its excursions into fascinating architectural byways, such as the history of castles, why the mendicant monks wanted simpler churches, and the superiority of the truss to the girder. More than 1,000 illustrations, including 91 color plates, provide ample visual reference. --Cathy Curtis --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This new edition updates the 1986 edition of this authoritative historical survey of Western architecture. As the introduction points out, this survey is "mainly a history of monumental buildings." Trachtenberg (*Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art and Power in Early Modern Florence*) and Hyman (*Marcel Breuer, Architect*) proceed chronologically, discussing significant styles, works, and architects. The scope is more restrictive than that of other heavyweights, e.g., Sir Banister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture* and Spiro Kostof and others' *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*, which include non-Western and vernacular architecture. Nevertheless, this new volume considers diverse modes of modern architecture that have flourished, abetted by computer-aided design and unprecedented wealth, during the past 20 years. Included are very recent masterworks such as Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin. The high-quality graphics include 91 color plates, and an illustrated glossary is provided. The many libraries holding the previous edition will want to purchase this update; other large public and academic libraries should also consider. David R. Conn, Surrey P.L., B.C. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This really is a great history book. Start reading at the beginning and just keep going. It's the side of history most people don't really see.

The book is beautiful and big and heavy

Numerous pages in book are double printed making it extremely difficult to read.

Good seller. Works great, thank you.

a classic architectural history text, this book maintains the critical analysis necessary to be a comprehensive resource for the serious student. Not the pretty pictures and fancy diagrams of more contemporary textbooks, but does that really matter?

A great book! A classic!

it's a book, was in great shape.

Great textbook, thoroughly explains the aesthetics behind historic and modern buildings.

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