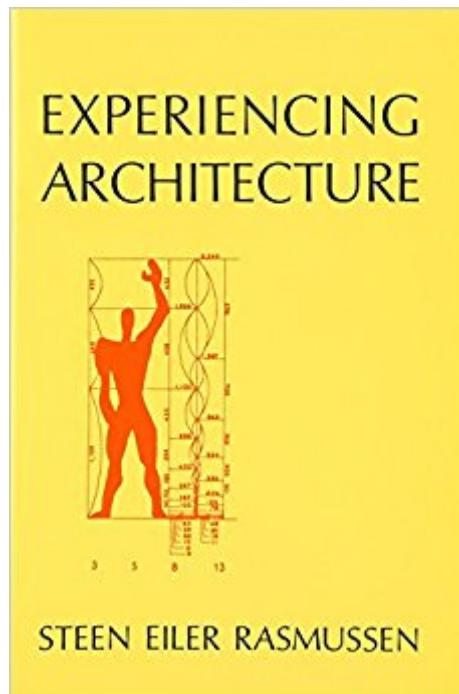


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# Experiencing Architecture



## Synopsis

Widely regarded as a classic in the field, *Experiencing Architecture* explores the history and promise of good design. Generously illustrated with historical examples of designing excellence -- ranging from teacups, riding boots, and golf balls to the villas of Palladio and the fish-feeding pavilion of Beijing's Winter Palace -- Rasmussen's accessible guide invites us to appreciate architecture not only as a profession, but as an art that shapes everyday experience. In the past, Rasmussen argues, architecture was not just an individual pursuit, but a community undertaking. Dwellings were built with a natural feeling for place, materials and use, resulting in "a remarkably suitable comeliness." While we cannot return to a former age, Rasmussen notes, we can still design spaces that are beautiful and useful by seeking to understand architecture as an art form that must be experienced. An understanding of good design comes not only from one's professional experience of architecture as an abstract, individual pursuit, but also from one's shared, everyday experience of architecture in real time -- its particular use of light, color, shape, scale, texture, rhythm and sound. *Experiencing Architecture* reminds us of what good architectural design has accomplished over time, what it can accomplish still, and why it is worth pursuing. Wide-ranging and approachable, it is for anyone who has ever wondered "what instrument the architect plays on."

## Book Information

Paperback: 245 pages

Publisher: The MIT Press; 2nd edition (March 15, 1964)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0262680025

ISBN-13: 978-0262680028

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars 33 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #16,768 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Reference > Architecture > Study & Teaching #21 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Architecture #46 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture

## Customer Reviews

A book of great charm and broad understanding. (Architectural Forum)...so lucid and clear that every layman and beginner will be able to understand and to enjoy it. (Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism)

Profusely illustrated with fine instances of architectural experimentation through the centuries, Experiencing Architecture manages to convey the intellectual excitement of superb design. From teacups, riding boots, golf balls, and underwater sculpture to the villas of Palladio and the fish-feeding pavilion of the Peking Winter Palace, the author ranges over the less-familiar by-ways of designing excellence.

I am interested in architecture as a hobby, and as a potential career at some point in the future, so the perspective I had when reading this book was that of an informed amateur. I can't praise this little book enough. In its pages are the best explanations and analyses of contrasts, textures, shapes, and colors that I have seen in one single, condensed location. Originally published in Denmark in 1959, and therefore lacking some of the more contemporary and postmodern design trends, this is an invaluable analysis of primarily European design through the mid twentieth century. This book is profusely illustrated with black and white photographs (most of which were taken by Rasmussen himself) and a fair number of drawings, all of which greatly assist the reader with his understanding of the material. Specific buildings mentioned are too numerous to list, but the run the gamut from St. Peter's basilica in Rome, to the haunting and sinister Palazzetto Zuccari (also in Rome), to the ultramodern Johnson Wax Company building in Racine, Wisconsin by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the very modern study in open spaces found in the Copenhagen Police Headquarters (one of my personal favorites.) This would be a useful guide to architects, and is the single best introduction to historical architectural style that I have yet found. Anyone with even a passing interest in architectural design or history would love this book.

Great book for the layperson looking towards a deeper (but not academic) understanding of architecture. The organization/progression of the book is impeccable, and inspires you to read quickly.

In this tightly packed and perfectly illustrated book, Rasmussen manages to convey the elements that make architecture significant to people, governments, cultures, and even to historic god-believers (and why). If someone asked me to recommend one book to read about architecture, this would be it. A classic, indeed.

Really solid book. Read it my Freshman year in architecture school and greatly enjoyed it. Definitely

a lot to digest in here. Happy reading!

Structural problem: The subject matter is so imbedded, hidden, submerged, in the stream of conscious dialogue, that you can easily miss it and give up reading for the apparent lack of content. There is a complete lack of headings and sub-headings within the chapters, so when the subject changes it leaves you searching for the needle in the haystack "subject" that does not want to reveal itself. This is a classic subject that could have been written in a 30 page "white paper" as they call them. Instead, you get 237 pages of blather. Goes on and on. Too wordy. Given the excessive "wander" the points are not well defined. The book needs sub concepts identified under the chapter headings rather than just wandering "points" made here, there, and everywhere, as the writing wanders through its many paragraphs. A great title and idea but the wordiness and lack of concrete definitions injure its quality. Are you a architecture writer? Fix this and get famous. But its "fame" and many reprinting keep it going. I'll put it on the shelf to impress my friends.   .

This book is probably one of the most pretentious books I've ever tried reading. Couldn't even make it half way.

This book teaches you aspects of architecture you may almost know. It clearly defines architecture and makes the reader aware of things they did not know before. It's like a dictionary for architecture.

I knew the book since 1960, and I still love it, and use it for presents. PSF

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