

Immersive Cocoon ?2011?

OZ · Friday, April 1st, 2011

Please maximize and play LOUD!

This spec teaser film, directed & 3D CGI by ArTect's publisher & writer Oliver Zeller, reveals an evolution in computing interaction. Within a setting inspired by the penultimate scene from Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Starring a renowned actor of stage & screen; live action was filmed multi-camera, against greenscreen atop a backlit plexi floor on a shoestring budget. The actor was then integrated into an entirely digitally created CG set rendered at 1080HD.

The Immersive Cocoon is a future concept study by Production Designer Tino Schaedler with design collective NAU; an idea to push the envelope and provoke a new conception of interface technology.

More info, behind the scenes & complete credits at www.i-cocoon.com.



An Urban Tragedy

OZ · Sunday, October 25th, 2009



Once perceived as the scorn of urban areas, graffiti at its best has resulted in murals that transform dull architecture and even derelict neighborhoods and decrepit walls into vibrant & appealing spaces.

Graffiti is a tradition that reaches into the annals of history. Ancient Rome was rife with it, offering social commentary, satire and a reflection of the times. One graffito near Palatine Hill in Rome, the Alexamenos graffito, is believed to be the earliest known pictorial representation of the crucifixion of Jesus. Of such significance to Rome's history, its graffiti was brilliantly

brought to life by A52 in the title sequence for HBO's series Rome.

Where as modern graffiti can truly serve aesthetic needs, its ancient counterpart appeared to lack the same lofty aesthetics. Perhaps it wasn't as necessary in prominent cities abundant with ornate architecture and cobbled streets. Our modern urban areas maybe cleaner & more practical, but these concrete and asphalt jungles too frequently suffer from banality.

Granted graffiti has long been accused of producing "an atmosphere of social decay and neglect", its artists subjected as criminals. A preponderance on uninspired writing in modern graffiti, amateurish chaotic scrawls, gang communications and misguided placement, lends credence to this argument. Subjective material in today's uptight politically correct climate adds to the issue. It is understandable why local authorities would paint over or clean away such work.

However when the work is of such supreme excellence, when it clearly revitalizes an area, and its destruction produces a deterioration of the space, it is the local authorities that have committed a crime. Produced an urban tragedy.

Throughout England, the destruction of art by famed artist, Banksy, captures this disturbing trend. One that has shown a level of sheer ineptness and ignorance by local authorities. The common rebuttal that neither the cleaners, councils or organizations are professional art critics only serves to highlight their idiocy.

Several years ago London Underground workers painted over a renowned "Pulp Fiction mural visible near Old Street Tube station", of Jackson & Travolta holding bannanas instead of guns. A mural that made a highly visible, yet ugly section of an ugly building, interesting. Its replacement, an unsightly black swath.

Ironically, several other less desirable graffiti appeared in its place, continually painted over, forming a dialog via architecture. From a request to bring back Banksy to an anti-terrorism scrawl and a philosophical comment " with a poor sense of scale", that declared "Nothing Lasts Forever".

In another tragic incident, workmen hired by the infamously incompetent Hackney Council, began painting over a Banksy mural on private property in Stoke Newington, East London, despite pleas to cease from the property manager. Their initial response, "The council's position is not to make a judgement call on whether graffiti is art." It was later added, "Due to a problem at the land registry, unfortunately our letters stating our intention to clean this building didn't reach the owner."

The mural, commissioned by the band Blur for their 2003 single Crazy Beat, apparently "attracted tourists from all over the world and become a local landmark". Its destruction possibly resulting in lost tourism revenue for the borough and leaving an uninviting black blight in its wake.

As the demolition of Penn Station spurred a historical preservation movement, it seems graffiti now needs its own preservation movement.





Images 1 - 5 | [Bansky](#). Image 5 photographed by [Richard Cocks via Flickr](#).

Image 6 | [El Mac](#) with [Retna](#) featuring Jolie Robinson.

Image 7 | [El Mac](#) with [Reyes](#). Photography by [FunkandJazz](#).

Image 8 | Unknown.

Behind the House of Imagination

OZ · Thursday, September 17th, 2009

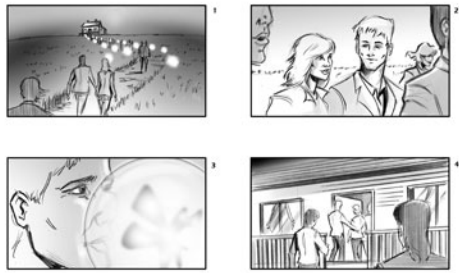


On July 7th, The SciFi channel rebranded itself to Syfy. The new name was perhaps the most widely derided since Nintendo's market leading Wii. Nonetheless, it appears to be paying dividends with increased viewership. Syfy's previous identity remained intact with expanded brand potential, in an era where the traditional television model continues to erode.

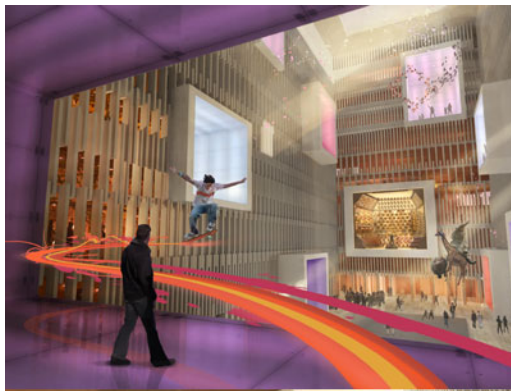
Rather than being branded as a destination for only sci-fi, they really wanted "to own the imagination space." This led Syfy to commission an ident short film, ***House of Imagination***, as part of their ***Imagine Greater*** campaign.

BAFTA & Cannes Lion award winning 4Creative spearheaded the endeavour, directed by Brett Foraker. Accompanying him, the cinematographer of Watchmen, Lost and 300, Larry Fong; and production designer Tino Schaedler, whose credits include Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, and The Golden Compass. Visual effects were provided by the Moving Picture Company.

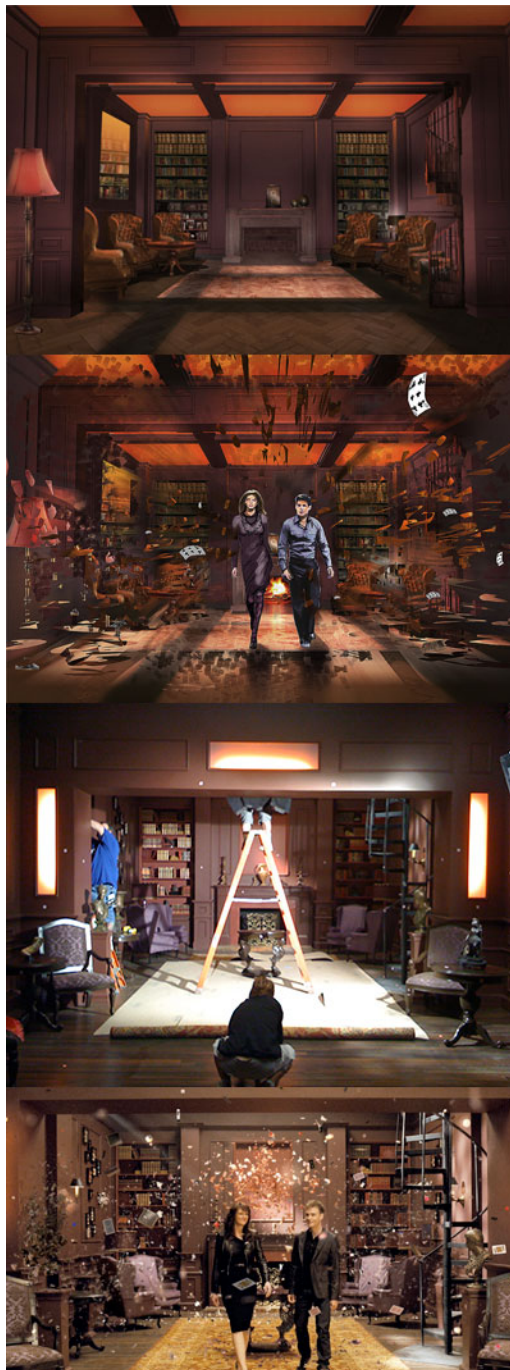
Following is a behind the scenes glimpse of the design, courtesy Tino Schaedler. Each set focuses on a space, featuring concept art & digital set designs accompanied by construction photos and the finished shot.



House on the Hill



Atrium



Game Room featuring Amanda Tapping & Robin Dunne from Sanctuary



Jungle featuring Josh Gates from Destination Truth



Fairground featuring the cast of Eureka



Ping Pong Room



Origami Room



Classroom featuring Scare Tactics host Tracy Morgan

Production Designer Tino Schaedler

Construction Isolated Ground

Art Director Gaston Langer

Set Decorator Klaus Hasmann

Propmaster Sebastian Ize

Graphics Kevin Kabala

Art Dept. Coordinator Jennifer Fullwood

Set Designers Owen Foley and Gregory Van Horn

3D Modeler Trevor Tuttle

Illustrators Matthias Begguer, Fabian Lacey, Thomas Tenery and David Goodwin

Emotive Architecture

OZ · Thursday, July 16th, 2009



Over the decades individuals have become more outward in their expression, most recently exemplified by the rise of social networks. Through their [Design Probes](#) initiative, electronics giant Philips has invested considerable resources researching technologies that afford users new modes of expression from dynamic tattoos to dresses, receptive and reflective of the wearer's mood.

What if this notion is extended to an architectural context? Not just a visual branding exercise or minor interactive quality between pedestrian and facade as produced today, but something more substantial.

Select architecture is certainly capable of eliciting emotion, in some instances it even has the potential to embody our collective emotions and mood. In New York, the external lighting of buildings had become increasingly popular by the early twentieth century, culminating in the Empire State Building's colored floodlit exterior that mark special occasions. Following 9/11, from September 16th till November 31st, the lights were red, white and blue, a symbolic representation of the country's unity and hope.

Asian megacities have since taken such exterior lighting to the extreme as seen in [Hong Kong's Peak Tower](#). Here "a 55-minute sequence and a five minute 'Showtime' script - illuminate the pixelated ceiling, crystal ceiling and underside of the boat and are synchronized so 'the whole building sings and dances together'." Perched on The Peak overlooking Hong Kong, the building almost becomes an emotive character itself.

The EDD (Embedded Data-texture Display) of [Hague's Hotel Mercure](#) offers a true hint at the possibility of emotive architecture. Its concept involved "An interactive display incorporating a camera interface to track people's activity on Spui Plaza. The idea is to encourage people on the street to move playfully and consciously communicate with the architecture to generate patterns. Movements captured would be instantly translated into colour traces on the panels."

Considering this evolution, a building that senses its occupants and externally manifests their emotions and pursuits in abstract light becomes a fascinating possibility. Such architecture could be further served by a twisting structure with concave facades or a building whose surface undulates as in Gehry's first skyscraper, the [Beekman Tower](#) in NYC. Thus allowing its own occupants to witness the visual feedback, creating a potential for dialog through architecture.



Above | From the art series TV by [Mathieu Bernard-Reymond](#).

Top | Le Prisme Concert Hall, Aurillac. Architecture by [Brisac Gonzalez](#).

Road Work

OZ · Thursday, July 16th, 2009



Beth Kaltman and Jason Koxvold have occupations that frequently take them on the road. Beth, represented by such luminary modeling agencies as Ford Models. Jason, creative director at ad agency StrawberryFrog's New York office.

This road work has facilitated their individual passion for high caliber photography.

The recently launched [Beth Kaltman Photography](#) houses a wide array of her impressionist photography.

While Jason Koxvold's large format works including *[Detroit's Freedom shitter](#)* is scattered across Flickr. Jason's penchant for capturing abandoned urban landscapes and derelict architecture is reminiscent of Robert Polidori's work and one adventure to Murmansk resulted in the FSB, formerly the KGB, taking him in for questioning. A story told in his memorable blog, [The Arctic Mental](#).



Photos 1 - 4 Copyright Jason Koxvold.



Photos 5 - 7 Copyright Beth Kaltman.

Book Watch | Bioshock to Nature's Patterns

OZ · Friday, May 29th, 2009



Bioshock Breaking the Mold: Developer's Edition Art Book

"This 174 page, 8"x10" limited run soft cover artbook, available only on the Take-Two Store, features never-before seen art from BioShock 1, stories about the game's journey through its years of development, commentary from the team, an introduction by 2K Marin's Executive Producer Alyssa Finley, several new sections, and much more."

Editor's Note: The art of Bioshock is among the finest in gaming history. That fans voted three other items over an art book for the Collector's Edition was a travesty. Now rectified thanks to Bioshock Community Manager Elizabeth Tobey. Art reproduction is of a high quality, accompanied by numerous snippets of development insight from various team members. A thick perfect bound volume, it lacks the high end hardcover quality of the genre's upper echelon art books. However this doesn't detract, thanks to its styling, it almost come across like a relic from Rapture itself. If the \$25 price tag is undesirable, the original and shorter PDF art book is available for [download](#).



Collecting Stories

"Challenged by his son Kristian Davies, the award winning author of Laynfaroh's first book, *The Orientalists*, to write the story of a forty-year passion for collecting American paintings, Tom Davies quickly found himself not only recalling events surrounding their acquisition but also recounting how the 'art gene' was passed from his father to him and onto his two sons. This *Collecting Stories* is unlike any other book focusing on a family's lifelong pursuit of its passion. It is written entirely by the collector, not simply a hired art historian. It communicates, at a personal level, the great joy and pleasure derived from the people (artists, dealers, museum personnel, and other collectors) encountered along the way, the lessons learned (both good and bad), and the satisfaction gained from increased knowledge and insight.

As the title states, there are 400 pieces of artwork, reflecting the ever-expanding interests of Mr. and Mrs. Davies, collected over forty years, ranging from 19th-century Hudson River School landscape, marine, genre, and still life to the work expatriate artists in Europe and the Middle East, to the transitional period of Tonalism into Impressionism, Realism, art of the American West, illustration and contemporary artists of today. For the most part, the work is academic or representational. Reflecting the personal tastes of a private collection obtained without the aid of advisers, some schools or styles are more heavily represented than others. Reflecting financial realities of the private collector, some examples by given artists are major, occasionally ironic, while others are smaller, more personal pieces.

Mr. Davies clearly states he is not attempting to add tomes of new or controversial perspectives to the grand study of art; scholars abound who are doing this on a regular basis. Nevertheless, his concise narratives on 236 artists reveal many nuggets of information about the artists, the eras in which they worked, and the individual paintings as well.

Collecting Stories appeals to art collectors as well as anyone with an interest, fascination, and desire to collect any objects. Have fun with *Collecting Stories* - it is a life-fulfilling journey."

Editor's Note: An unrivaled work on American paintings, the stunning art reproductions on glossy paper stock, are equaled by the unique & fascinating commentary. The words of a collector providing an unexpected insight from traditional writings on art, with a suitable restraint that results in a perfect balance between imagery and text. Autographed copies available directly from the publisher.

Hardcover | 364 pages | Laynfaroh | January 2008



Nature's Patterns: A Tapestry in Three Parts

"Patterns are everywhere in nature--in the ranks of clouds in the sky, the stripes of an angelfish, the arrangement of petals in flowers. Where does this order and regularity come from? As Philip Ball reveals in *Nature's Patterns: A Tapestry in Three Parts*, this order creates itself. The patterns we see come from self-organization. Indeed, scientists have found that there is a pattern-forming

tendency inherent in the basic structure and processes of nature, whether living or non-living, so that from a few simple themes, and the repetition of simple rules, endless beautiful variations can arise.

Shapes | Part of a trilogy of books exploring the science of patterns in nature, Shapes looks at how shapes form. From soap bubbles to honeycombs, delicate shell patterns, and even the developing body parts of a complex animal like ourselves, the author uncovers patterns in growth and form in all corners of the natural world, explains how these patterns are self-made, and describes why similar shapes and structures may be found in very different settings, orchestrated by nothing more than simple physical forces. This book will make you look at the world with fresh eyes, seeing order and form in places you'd least expect.

Flow | The second volume in this trilogy of books on patterns in nature, Flow explores the elusive rules that govern the science of chaotic behavior. From the swirl of a wisp of smoke to the huge persistent storm system that is the Great Spot on Jupiter, Ball explains the mechanisms at play whenever things flow, and how these give rise to many of the patterns we recognize in Nature--from ripples on a beach to swirling galaxies. The book describes fascinating phenomena such as turbulence, which still defies complete scientific understanding; the principles of symmetry-breaking; and how chaotic behavior emerges in systems. It also looks at how patterns of flow have captivated philosophers and artists for centuries, from Leonardo da Vinci to the movement of Art Nouveau.

Branches | Many patterns in nature show a branching form - trees, river deltas, blood vessels, lightning, the cracks that form in the glazing of pots. These networks share a peculiar geometry, finding a compromise between disorder and determinism, though some, like the hexagonal snowflake or the stones of the Devil's Causeway fall into a rigidly ordered structure. Branching networks are found at every level in biology - from the single cell to the ecosystem. Human-made networks too can come to share the same features, and if they don't, then it might be profitable to make them do so: nature's patterns tend to arise from economical solutions.

Editor's Note: Nature has long been an inspiration in the arts from architecture to the use of procedural textures in visual effects. These series of books are an excellent expansion of Philip Ball's acclaimed previous work, *The Self-Made Tapestry: Pattern Formation in Nature*. Shapes is now shipping.

Hardcover | 272 - 320 pages | Oxford University Press | May 2009



The Art of Terminator Salvation

"The much anticipated fourth instalment of the critically acclaimed Terminator series, Terminator Salvation, starring Christian Bale (Batman Begins) and directed by McG, reaches cinemas on 22 May 2009.

In a brand-new chapter in the Terminator chronicles, Judgment Day has come to pass and Skynet has destroyed much of the world's population. In this post-apocalyptic world, the resistance, including John Connor, continues its brutal fight for survival.

This beautifully designed companion volume features hundreds of color illustrations, storyboards and intricately designed production art, showcasing the amazing talent that went into the making of this remarkable movie."



A New Kindgom

OZ · Monday, May 4th, 2009



NBC's *Kings* has proven the most fascinating new television series of the mid-season. A reinterpretation of the classic King David tale translated into modern times, monarchy intact.

New York City serves as the basis for the new capital of this modern kingdom, Shiloh, retrofitted with visual effects and apt production design as done so effectively in director Francis E. Lawrence's previous work, *I Am Legend*.

A long, straight road leads to Shiloh's centerpiece landmark, evoking at least in effect, the East-West axis of Hitler and Speer's Welthauptstadt Germania. Except here there is no Arch of Triumph or Volkshalle, rather a prominent skyscraper, its black angled facades reminiscent of a stealth fighter shrouding the monarchy's political machinations. Its position in the skyline unimpeded by competing distinctive skyscrapers; the Chrysler and Empire State Building are nowhere to be seen.

This prominent digital skyscraper rests atop the New York Public Library at Bryant Park with the same forceful effect as New York's Hearst Headquarters by Foster + Partners & Adamson Associates. A modernist glass skyscraper thrusting out of the old Art Deco, or in this case, Beux Arts structure.

However the King's throne room remains firmly rooted within modernity, doing away with what would be corny artifice in this modern setting. Rather King Silas sits at the length of a conference table, his senior staff opposite with members of the court in the tiered seating beyond. His back toward a massive glass curtain wall overlooking the prosperous empire. In actuality we're seeing Columbus Circle from within the Time Warner Building's Allen Room. A performance space, five stories up, flanked by a 150 foot glass cable-net conceived by James Carpenter Design & Associates.

No Kingdom would be complete without a palace. Here the substitute is *The Aphorp*, condominium residences "modeled after the Pitti Palace in Florence and brought to life by the passion of William Waldorf Astor." An appropriately gilded and stately selection with stressed verticals that epitomizes the notion of a palace within modern architecture. The interior is an equally fabled residence, *The Hempstead House* in Long Island, formerly occupied by the Gould and later Guggenheim families, also doubles as the King's country home. Yet there is a restraint to the gilded stylings fitting for modernity, avoiding an over abundance of ornamentation in the vein of Versailles, that would have Alfred Loos rolling in his grave.

An arguably abstract form of the king set within a butterfly serves as the Kingdom's insignia, plastered at every opportunity as one would expect in such a civilization. Butterflies represent a visual manifestation of God's will, a running motif in the pilot. The design is set against orange colors, uncommon for a nation's flag, perhaps inspired by the orange fabric **Gates** that briefly filled New York's Central Park in February 2005 courtesy artists, Christo and Jean-

Claude.

Unfortunately the costly Kings debuted to pitiful ratings. Its remaining episodes now relegated to Saturday's at 8pm, commencing June 13th with aired episodes available for free on Hulu or NBC.com. Kings may represent a death knell for such bold creative endeavours on NBC. A network that has lagged in fourth for most of the decade after being number one during the nineties. Though as Kings proves, this is not due to a lack of quality programming also indicated by the deserving inclusion of Friday Night Lights & Life on AFI's annual Top Ten list or highly entertaining fare like Chuck. Their woes have led to Jay Leno taking over the weekdays 10pm slot come fall.

New York as a base for television series also appears shortlived. Spurred by a 35% tax credit that attracted a bounty of shows from Fringe and Ugly Betty to Life on Mars and Castle, New York State capped the credit at half a billion dollars. The credit lasted a mere ten months and a \$350 million dollar extension is a short term measure. Subsequently, Fringe has already moved production to Vancouver and without a tax break, the attrition will only continue due to the additional costs of shooting in New York.

Savour it while it lasts.



Images from the television series Kings. Copyright NBC.

Book Watch | Orientalists

OZ · Monday, May 4th, 2009

During the nineteenth century, European and American artists flocked to Eastern cultures, from Morocco to India. Their works fueled the exotic and mythical perception of the Orient with cinematic depictions of islamic culture that continue to influence the arts today. These artists are commonly referred to as the Orientalists.

Last year while exploring and working in Marrakech I came across numerous books on or related to the topic. Following are some noteworthy selections.

If you're ever in Marrakech, be sure to visit the oldest book store in Marrakech, open since 1948, it can be found within the medina's souks. Publisher ACR also has a well stocked shop buried in Gueliz, the city's French section.



Arabesques

"This volume throws light upon an art expression to be found clad in the garments of Moroccan architecture. A work that provides keys to the understanding of geometrical arabesques. An art of

rare and precious mastery elaborated through the determined efforts of generations of anonymous artists. A brief historical survey defines the specificity of Islamic art in Morocco. Three principal styles of decorative architecture are studied: calligraphy, floral arabesque, and geometrical arabesque. Illustrations and photographs of some of the most beautiful sites of Morocco (monuments, royal palaces and cities) are a pleasure for the eye." 700 Reproductions. Editor's Note: Arabesques are elaborate repeating geometric forms that commonly adorn Islamic architecture. Replete with numerous photos, illustrations and even a few visualizations by french VFX firm BUF, this slipcased tome clarifies their composition and reveals the structure behind the muqarnas, stalactite elements used in archways and domes. This is the finest book on the topic and one of the few titles available in English from French publisher ACR.

Slipcase Hardcover | 440 pages | ACR Edition | April 1999



L'Architecture Sacree De L'Islam (Sacred Architecture of Islam)

"The history of the sacred architecture of Islam reveals a surprising degree of unity and coherence, the result of the continuous expansion of the Muslim religion that lasted 800 years and was world-wide in its scope, before subsiding in the 16th century. The many representative examples contained in this richly-illustrated album offer an overview permitting even the casual reader to follow the successive transformations and stylistic variations on a country-by-country basis.

The text and illustrations cover twenty-one countries, all of which were touched by the wave of Islamisation in the course of their history.

Originating in the holy city of Medina, the current proceeded in three separate directions: North Africa and Spain, Central Asia and Central Europe. This system of geographical analysis permits a comparative study of the regional specificities of the monuments and edifices common to each zone, based on their respective architectural plans, interior and exterior volumes and decorative elements.

The first two chapters of the study contain an explanation of the religious and architectural considerations necessary for formulating a general overview of the subject, while the third chapter is devoted to specific and representative examples of Islamic architecture throughout the world."

Editor's Note: For Westerners, the sacred nature of Mosques allow only Muslim followers to enter, so to many, the fine architecture of Islam is not fully appreciated. This large book, featuring 1500 photos, lifts the veil. Only available in French.

Slipcase Hardcover | 480 pages | ACR Edition | March 1997



Medersa de Marrakech

"Captures the daily life inside and around the Ben Youssef Medersa. Richly illustrated with full page photographs and statements, bringing to life one of the most prestigious monuments of Marrakech."

Editor's Note: Perhaps the greatest piece of architecture in Marrakech. The Ben Youssef Medersa, now open to the public, was once the largest muslim school in all of Africa. The detail and alignment of architectural elements is a sight to behold, beautifully captured through atmospheric photographs. A complete overview with plans and detail illustrations. Unfortunately numerous copies of this French language publication are plagued by residual glue, resulting in stuck and ultimately damaged pages. Check copy prior to purchasing.

Slipcase Hardcover | 192 pages | Edisud | 1999



Orientalists: Western Artists in Arabia, the Sahara, Persia & India

"Americans and Europeans have a dual perception of the land that stretches from Morocco to India. Much of it Muslim, for the past 1,000 years no region has inspired more fear for the West, yet none has been a greater source of wonder and a stronger influence on Western art and artists. Contemporary events have darkened that perception, yet from the Great Pyramids to the Taj Mahal, the Middle East and India have for centuries lured Westerners to travel and have inspired their architecture, literature, music and fashion.

The Orientalists pursues perhaps the richest era of this long tradition of fascination for the Near and Middle East?the mid to late 19th century, when painters from America and from every country in Europe traveled in and painted the vast cities and peoples of North Africa, the Holy Land, Persia and India. Many of these regions had only recently become accessible to the West. The first in, the first to see - the painters, known as "Orientalists" created a rich body of work of a world that was rapidly changing, during the last precious years before modernization.

The Holy Land, North Africa, Persia, India - these are places whose history is filled with both beauty and pain. The artists painted many sides that captured this duality?the dignity of faces, and the powerful color and beauty of architecture, calligraphy and clothing, but also the brutality of poverty and the tragic outcomes of violence.

The cinematic appeal of the images is undeniable. Hugely popular in their time, the Orientalists had an enormous influence on early film makers like D.W. Griffith and their recreations of Babylon and Biblical times. A perusal of the images in this book shows their deep influence on many aspects of contemporary visual arts, a kind of prototype of many 20th-century favorites, from the "Star Wars" films, "Lawrence of Arabia", "Gladiator" and the many films set in the desert milieu, to the "Dune Chronicles," Frank Frazetta and "The Lord of the Rings" illustration tradition.

Featuring over 300 images, culled from 45 different institutions in seven different countries, many of these pictures have rarely been seen publicly since their creation a century and more ago. Having both traveled and lived in the region, author Kristian Davies approaches this often misunderstood genre of art from a fresh perspective. The book is designed to be a primer, a fresh new approach and redefinition of the genre. Richly illustrated with full color pictures, many with second details, it is an art history book that puts the artwork first. Davies uses a selection of the finest pictures in the genre to illuminate the life and customs of this extraordinary part of our world. The text is intended for the general reader, exploring diverse subjects like deserts and pilgrimages, villages and bazaars, faith and spirituality, and the West?s enduring fascination with the harem and hookah."

Editor's Note: Atop the pantheon of books on Orientalist Painters. A highly prized volume, the Orientalists went out of print earlier this year and the publisher has confirmed that it will not be reprinted. If you can get your hands on a copy, don't hesitate.

Hardcover | 304 pages | Laynfaroh | August 2006



Over India: Kite's Eye Photographs of India

"Aerial photography is prohibited in India. It can only be done with permission from various government agencies. It is for this reason that there are hardly any substantial books on India from the air. For the first time, Nicolas Chorier achieves this feat by using the fascinating technique of kite photography (taking aerial pictures by using a kite to lift the camera). This book showcases the finest work of the French photographer, who has been shooting in India for many years. Seen here are unique and spectacular views of the wonders of India; jewels such as Amber Fort, Mehrangarh Fort, Nagaur Fort, Pushkar, Chittorgarh, Taj Mahal, Hampi, Mamallapuram and the beaches and backwaters of Kerala. Accompanying the pictures is the photographer's anecdotal take on his India odyssey. For anyone who loves India and its rich heritage, this lavish book is a sumptuous treat for the eyes."

Editor's Note: Everything from Jaipur to the banks of the Godavari. Among the finest aerial photography books ever published.

Hardcover | 192 pages | Anova | November 2007



Palaces and Gardens of Persia

"In both decoration and design, the grand buildings and gardens of traditional Persia consistently refer to "paradise." The very word itself refers to a sense of heavenly perfection, derived from an early Iranian term for "the Shah's royal hunting grounds."

Editor's Note: Perhaps the finest book on landscape architecture I came across during my work in Marrakech. Currently on sale for \$27.95 (57% off) at Strands in New York.

Hardcover | 299 pages | Princeton Architectural Press | April 2002



Steps to Water: The Ancient Stepwells of India

"In this broad historical and cultural overview, photographer and scholar Livingston (Philadelphia Univ.) shares her passion for western Indian stepwells and stepped ponds. A distinctive, often highly decorated communal Hindu architecture object, with origins in the seventh century in the semiarid regions of Gujarat and Rajasthan, stepwells reached their peak from 900 to 1300 C.E. as elaborate water buildings that were invested with ritual and social meanings. These passive water collection systems, designed to preserve monsoon rains, were modified by Muslims and Mughals into the mid-19th century, when British colonialism effectively shut them down. The erudite text presents building types, engineering, functions, art, ecology, and changes through the centuries,

including sanitation and preservation concerns. Livingston's poignant photographs capture the decayed and neglected condition of many sites. Maps, a chronology, a glossary, and even a bibliography of stepwell literature make this the definitive work in English." 142 color, 92 b/w illustrations.

Editor's Note: Steps to Water captures the ancient stepwells of India, as seen in films from The Fall to Baraka. "Think of Egypt's great pyramids, inverted and elegantly lodged in the earth to serve a subcontinent's thirst for water. That's the role of India's stepwells and stepped ponds, which, from the 5th through 19th centuries, served to catch water from the monsoons and save it for drinking, washing and bathing. These stone buildings, some as deep as nine stories with elaborate carved walls, columns and towers" evoke the drawings of M.C. Escher.

Hardcover | 120 pages | Princeton Architectural Press | April 2002



Gaming's Repurposed Spaces

OZ · Tuesday, March 24th, 2009



Since the turn of the century, repurposed spaces have proliferated, spurred by 21st century cultural influences and the green initiative. It's redefining the urban fabric, evident here in Lower Manhattan where the world's commercial mecca has become increasingly residential since 2001. More creative endeavours have led to efforts including the iconic [Freitag store in Zurich](#) and a [Redondo Beach house](#), both utilizing the ever popular recycled shipping container.

Recently, the most creative repurposed structures have existed in the digital realm of games, from Mirror's Edge to Fallout 3.

Diverging from the industrial greyness that pervades today's games, the art direction of last year's parkour extravaganza Mirror's Edge reigned supreme (See [CG Society Production Focus](#)). The architecture is for the most part pleasant, banal modernism, and purposely so, reminiscent of how Sydney was used to similar effect in The Matrix. Yet this city has a gorgeously hypnotic sheen accomplished with slick reflections and abundant whites accompanied by strong blue, orange and red hues. Among the architectural standouts is a nondescript AC cooling unit. Gutted, it serves as a concealed makeshift command center for the renegade runners, outfitted with considerable computer hardware.

Last year's game of the year, Fallout 3, redefines the repurposing of spaces in a grandiose way its two predecessors never did. Rivet City, a grounded and severed aircraft carrier that serves as a residential, scientific and trading outpost, conjures a virtual realization of the Freedom Ship. The Jefferson Memorial, has been transformed into a water purification plant, yet the most ingenious concept is the town of Megaton.

Built around a crater with an undetonated nuclear bomb, the town walls and buildings are constructed from the wreckage of a commercial airliner supplemented by additional materials from remnants at a nearby airport. The town rises three to four stories high in a quarry style pattern. Traversing to the upper levels involves one walking directly over the roofs of residences and businesses. Especially at dusk, Megaton transcends its haphazard deconstructivist qualities, the metal glistening in the sunlight like a Gehry building. As with

most repurposed spaces, showing an image somehow is insufficient, it must be experienced.



Mirror's Edge & Fallout 3 Concept Art. Copyright Electronic Arts and Bethesda Softworks respectively.

Book Watch | From Burma to Chicago

OZ · Tuesday, March 24th, 2009



21st-Century Masterpieces - Architecture of the New Millennium

"A concise overview of the most extraordinary landmarks built around the world since the turn of the millennium including stadia, theatres, museums, offices, government buildings, chapels and retail spaces.

Features such noteworthy projects as the Casa da Música in Portugal by OMA, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in the United States by Frank Gehry, Federation Square in Australia by Bates Smart, and the National Stadium in China by Herzog & de Meuron.

Includes a descriptive text for each project, accompanied by an extensive selection of exterior and interior photographs, plans and architectural drawings."

Editor's Note: This inexpensive hardcover volume will hit shelves along with 21st Century Houses. Both appear derived from the hefty Phaidon Atlas of 21st Century World Architecture.

Hardcover | 160 pages | Phaidon | May 2009



Absolutely Fabulous! Architecture and Fashion

"This globetrotting tour of the most spectacular flagship fashion stores shows how designers and architects are working together to reinvent the retail experience as we know it, exploring the synergies between fashion and architecture."

Editor's Note: This highly recommended book features inventive boutiques from Viktor & Rolf's Milan store to the Hong Kong based Armani Cafe. Released in 2006, the book is currently on sale, reduced from \$39.95 to \$12.95 at Strand in New York.

Paperback | 144 pages | Prestel | June 2006



Burma Chronicles

"After developing his acclaimed style of firsthand reporting with his bestselling graphic novels

Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea and Shenzhen: A Travelogue From China, Guy Delisle is back with *Burma Chronicles*. In this country notorious for its use of concealment and isolation as social control-where scissor-wielding censors monitor the papers, the leader of the opposition has spent twelve of the past eighteen years under house arrest, insurgent-controlled regions are effectively cut off from the world, and rumor is the most reliable source of current information-he turns his gaze to the everyday for a sense of the big picture.

Delisle's deft and recognizable renderings take note of almsgiving rituals, daylong power outages, and rampant heroin use in outlying regions, in this place where catastrophic mismanagement and iron-handed rule come up against profound resilience of spirit, expatriate life ambles along, and nongovernmental organizations struggle with the risk of co-option by the military junta. *Burma Chronicles* is drawn with a minimal line, and interspersed with wordless vignettes and moments of Delisle's distinctive slapstick humor."

Editor's Note: Another terrific graphic novel from Guy Delisle and his longest travelogue yet, most likely due to a year long furlough in the region. Some interesting observations of architecture and utilization of space in Burma.

A sneak peek is available online via [New York Magazine](#).

Hardcover | 208 pages | Drawn & Quarterly | October 2008



Digital Materiality in Architecture

"Robots build! At their program in architecture and Digital production at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) Zürich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich), the architects Gramazio & Kohler have installed a research facility that is unique in the world. It is based on a computer-controlled industrial robot that produces construction elements directly from design data. The robot works flexibly with a tremendous range of tools and materials. In this way Gramazio & Kohler probe the exciting potential of digital design, construction, and manufacturing techniques for architecture. In their projects they incorporate insights and discoveries from the field of computer-aided production into the architectonic design process, using computers to develop innovative construction techniques and architecture. First structures using robots have already been built, for example the much noted Gantenbein vineyard in Fläsch (CH) or the installation at the Swiss Pavilion at the 11th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice."

Editor's Note: Visit www.gramaziokohler.com for an overview of the fascinating projects covered in the book. Storefront for Art & Architecture in New York may still have signed copies in stock.

Hardcover Cloth | 112 pages | Lars Müller Publisher | October 2008



Paradise Lost

"A stunning archive of aerial photographs from the 1970s, *Paradise Lost: Persia from Above* provides a unique look at a beautiful landscape and fascinating culture few people have seen for themselves. In 1976 and 1978, Georg Gerster, the pioneer of aerial photography who has influenced every aerial photographer working today, had the rare opportunity to record the

landscape of Iran on over 100 flights and 300 flying hours. This unique photographic project resulted in a near complete documentation of the major archaeological sites and important landscapes in the region.

This book vividly brings to life a place, time and culture that few people outside Iran are able to witness. The book includes spectacular images of ancient citadels, desert ruins and rice fields spreading like a vast patchwork in a river delta, along with many unexpected sights, such as the bird's eye view of a crowded ski resort in the Alborz mountains, within easy reach of Tehran. Persia's densely packed cities are elegantly captured by Gerster and look so very different from Western European or North American cities of the same period - their complex, interlocking flat-roofed buildings are both timeless and timely, with architecture that has stood unchanged for thousands of years."

Editor's Note: An important release in the field of aerial photography, *Paradise Lost* joins the upper echelon of comparable publications that include *Over India* and *Earthsong*.

Hardcover | 184 pages | Phaidon | February 2009



The Transparent City

"Chicago, like many urban centers throughout the world, has recently undergone a surge of new construction, grafting a new layer of architectural experimentation onto those of past eras. In early 2007, the Museum of Contemporary Photography? with the support of U.S. Equities Realty, invited Michael Wolf as an artist-in-residence. Bringing his unique perspective on changing urban environments to a city renowned for its architectural legacy, Wolf chose to photograph the central downtown area, focusing specifically on issues of voyeurism and the contemporary urban landscape in flux.

This is Wolf's first body of work to address an American city. Whereas prior series have juxtaposed humanizing details within the surrounding geometry of the urban landscape, in *The Transparent City*, his details are fragments of life?digitally distorted and hyper-enlarged?snatched surreptitiously via telephoto lenses: Edward Hopper meets Blade Runner. The material resonates with all the formalism of the constructed, architectonic work for which Wolf is well-known, but also emphasizes the conceptual underpinnings of his ongoing engagement with the idea of how modern life unfolds within the framework of the ever-growing contemporary city."

Editor's Note: Following *Hong Kong: Front Door/Back Door*, Michael Wolf maintains his sight on dense architecture, shifting his focus from material remnants to individuals with pausing effect. The jacket copywriter's declaration, "Edward Hopper meets Blade Runner", isn't mere hyperbole and Michael Wolf provides a rare photographic treatment of an American city usually reserved for Asian megacities.

Hardcover | 112 pages | Aperture | November 2008