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Modern Architecture (Oxford History Of Art)



Synopsis

Colquhoun, an eminent scholar in the field of architecture, offers here a new account of international modernism that explores the complex motivations behind this revolutionary movement and assesses its triumphs and failures. The book focuses on the work of the main architects of the movement such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe, re-examining their work and shedding new light on their roles as acknowledged masters. The author presents a fascinating analysis of architecture with regard to politics, technology, and ideology, all while offering clear descriptions of the key elements of the Modern movement. Colquhoun shows clearly the evolution of the movement from Art Nouveau in the 1890s to the mega-structures of the 1960s, revealing the often-contradictory demands of form, function, social engagement, modernity and tradition.

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Customer Reviews

Alan Colquhoun writes a survey of modern architecture that aims to "sharpen our image" of a series of architects and styles that all attempted to represent and reflect a new era in human history while advocating for an evolution in the way people perceive and interact with their environments. This narrative is presented chronologically and thematically, examining the philosophies within the progression in the development of modernism, dovetailed with global events in the early twentieth century that had a dramatic impact upon it. Colquhoun does not eschew a focus on the masters of modernism, an approach that many might consider outdated, because "that was the nature of

modernism, despite its many claims to anonymity. • He attempts to place the reader within the mindsets of modern masters, tracing changes in the style from 1890 through the 1960s. Colquhoun's book spans continents, beginning its story in a Europe in the midst of the chaos and turmoil of the Industrial Revolution, quickly followed by a quick hop across the ocean to Chicago, where Sullivan and Burnham were building skyscrapers in a city undergoing a real estate boom. Colquhoun deftly combines context with analysis of buildings themselves, looking at architecture both as an artistic statement as well as a functional process, the creation of places for leisure and business. He does not neglect the great architects of the period. Wright, Corbusier, Mies, and Kahn are all examined in depth. Their influences, processes, and impacts are all laid out. The receptions these masters received are also studied, providing insight into the immediate reactions received by fellow architects and laymen. The book is presented in a linear fashion, with a progression occurring in modernism that increasingly disdains the classical.

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