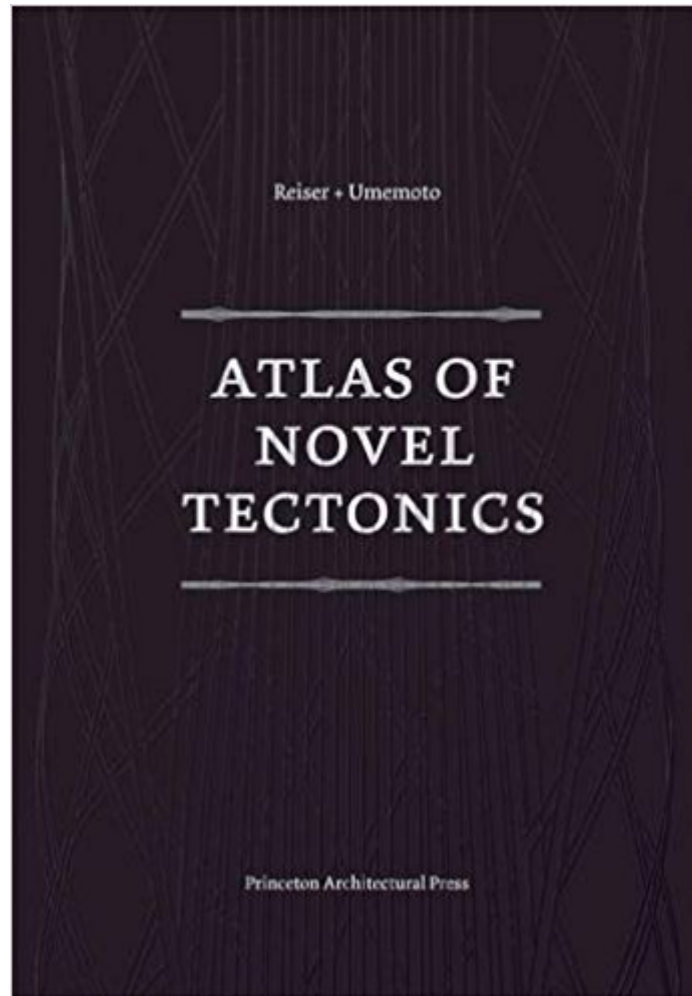


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# Atlas Of Novel Tectonics



## Synopsis

Architects Jesse Reiser and Nanako Umemoto have been generating some of the most provocative thinking in the field for nearly twenty years. With *Atlas of Novel Tectonics*, Reiser+Umemoto hone in on the many facets of architecture and illuminate their theories with great thought and simplicity. The Atlas is organized as an accumulation of short chapters that address the workings of matter and force, material science, the lessons of art and architectural history, and the influence of architecture on culture (and vice versa). Reiser+Umemoto see architectural design as a series of problem situations, and each chapter is an argument devoted to a specific condition or case. Influenced by a wide range of fields and phenomena Brillat-Savarin's classic *The Physiology of Taste* is one of their primary models the authors provide a cross-section of thinking and inspiration. The result is both an elucidation of the concepts that guide Reiser+Umemoto through their own design process and a series of meditations on topics that have formed their own sense as architects. *Atlas of Novel Tectonics* offers an entirely fresh perspective on subjects that are generally taken for granted, and does so with a welcome punch and energy.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book gets lots of play right now in (big "A") Architecture schools. I'm a firm believer that if your thoughts are clear, your writing is clear. This book embarks on many dialectical examples that are explained with too much "difficult writing" for its own good. Grad students of the world, beware the three DDDs that inspire some of this writing: Deleuze, Derrida and Delanda. They plow enormous fields in complicated patterns and only yield a kernel or two. Ironically, I admire Reiser + Umemoto

as architects and am looking forward to a book on their more recent work.

Once you sift through the esoteric jargon you'll find that the underlying "big idea" of Atlas is a bit...well, narrow-minded. It relegates the architect to the \*singular\* role of funny shape maker. Philosophically speaking, I'm not so down with it. That doesn't mean Atlas isn't worthwhile however. If formalism is your bag, there's plenty of potential to tap. Certainly, it's not an easy read, nor are all of the concepts as profound as RUR would like to think, but there's definitely some provocative ideas contained therein: "But we have other ambitions for this vitality, which now must enter and find expression in the fabric of matter itself. Let's be clear: it is not the vulgar misconception that architecture must be literally animate...but its substance, its scale, its transitions and measurement will be marked by the dilations and contractions of the energy field." As is the case with most contemporary architectural theory, you have to do a lot of digging, re-reading and source-referencing to understand the ideas. The prose can be just as high-brow and sanctimonious as the decon philosophers that influenced it (Derrida, for instance). Complex as they may seem, the ideas embedded can be quite provocative not in a life-changing way, but more in a "novel" sort of way. If you're into form or just want to stay up on theory, then I'd buy it.

An unexpectedly fine book on architectural theory that's rooted not in politics or aesthetics or lit-crit theory, but in the worlds of physics and engineering-- a look at architecture and architectural possibilities based on the sinews of buildings rather than the ideology of architects. I'm an historian by training, and an aficionado of architecture and design theory. Reiser + Umemoto have created a small book that offers a view of postmodern architecture seen through the lens of the physically possible. Anyone who wants to imagine new cities and new styles of building needs to consider the sheer physical constraints of design, and this book is a fine place to start.

Extremely good book. It explains lots of problems and concepts that architects will encounter. This book was recommended to me by a professor. He stated that within a month of having the book it seemed like every page was bookmarked, simply because there is important information on every page.

This volume renders a comprehensive exploration and analysis of the forces (both sentient and unwitting) that influence the construct of architecture and contemporary design. Thoughtfully organized, elegantly illustrated, - an excellent addition to any designer's library.

Great collection of short chapters about architectural components and philosophies. The book's construction itself is fantastic--complete with glued in color plates. Almost a retro feel. (They don't make them like this any more.) Recommended when you're looking for a small, well-made, book on architecture that explores philosophical and physical territory. This would make a great gift.

Highly recommended for those architects who seek to dig deep into the matter of design. In this case, a more fundamental way of thinking about design and thinking itself. Conceptual underpinnings are analyzed in a clear and systematic way, which is very rare in the field of architecture. The abstract concepts become clearer as you go through the book. What is great about this book is the use of diagrams. There are faults and some problems but, this book does contribute to the discourse of architecture through its reformulating what architects and thinkers have learned for the past 20 years (more or less) into a easier-to-digest format. An admirable and respectable work on multiple levels.

like a pilot on an early jet flight, you may find it can be a bit hard to breathe - and there will be some inevitably jarring moments as you try to ride this "bullet".but it is an exhilarating and momentous ride.buy it - you'll find yourself dreaming of more.[...]

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