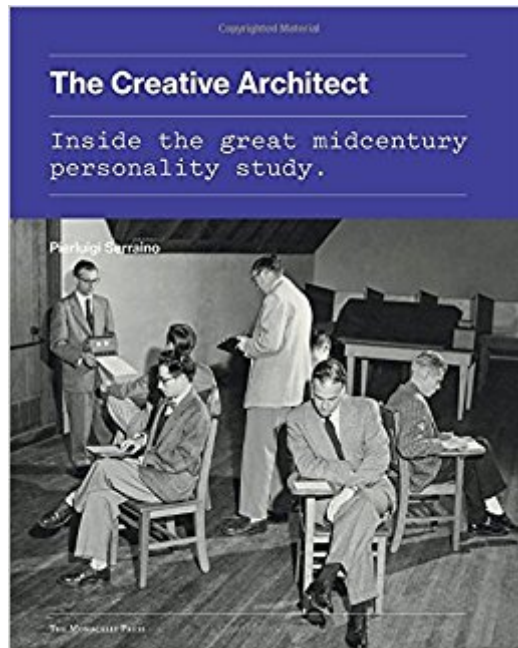


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The Creative Architect: Inside The Great Midcentury Personality Study



Synopsis

An unknown episode in the annals of modern architecture and psychology—a 1950s University of California, Berkeley, evaluation of creativity with subjects including Eero Saarinen, I.M. Pei, Philip Johnson, and 37 other major architects—is published for the first time. The story of midcentury architecture in America is dominated by outsized figures—Richard Neutra, George Nelson, Louis Kahn—who were universally acknowledged as creative geniuses. Yet virtually unheard of is the intensive 1958–59 study, conducted at the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research at the University of California, Berkeley, that scrutinized these and dozens of other famous architects in an effort to map their minds. Deploying an array of tests reflecting current psychological theories, the investigation sought to answer questions that still apply to creative practice today: What makes a person creative? What are the biographical conditions and personality traits necessary to actualize that potential? The study’s findings have been gathered through numerous original sources, including questionnaires, aptitude tests, and interview transcripts, revealing how these great architects evaluated their own creativity and that of their peers. In *The Creative Architect*, Pierluigi Serraino charts the development, implementation, and findings of this historic study, producing the first look at a fascinating and forgotten moment in architecture, psychology, and American history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is undoubtedly the best book I have read on creativity. This is because the book is based on a solid study as opposed to suppositions. It provides interesting insights onto the work habits of some

major architects and their personalities which are rarely covered elsewhere. One of the most interesting results was that when architects were asked to name their major influences, the person mentioned in most books about them was not in the list. It also explains how innovation is not a group activity because groups actually stifle the creativity of individuals. The origins of personality tests in Nazi Germany is an interesting insight. The last chapter about creativity and its traits is a fascinating read. There is a lot of really useful information in the book. It took me one week to read, and then another week to reread two of the most interesting chapters. There is a video on YouTube where Jon Cleese discusses creativity and mentions this book.

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