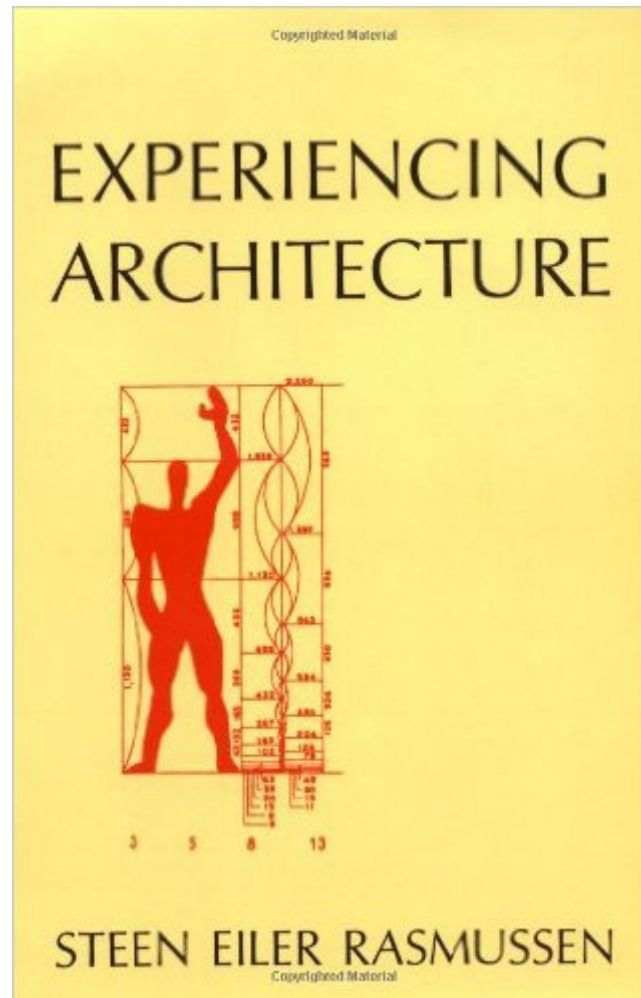


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# Experiencing Architecture



## Synopsis

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 byways of designing excellence. At one time, writes Rasmussen, "the entire community took part in forming the dwellings and implements they used. The individual was in fruitful contact with these things; the anonymous houses were built with a natural feeling for place, materials and use and the result was a remarkably suitable comeliness. Today, in our highly civilized society, the houses which ordinary people are doomed to live in and gaze upon are on the whole without quality. We cannot, however, go back to the old method of personally supervised handicrafts. We must strive to advance by arousing interest in and understanding of the work the architect does. The basis of competent professionalism is a sympathetic and knowledgeable group of amateurs, of non-professional art lovers."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When I was looking for some books to begin to learn about architecture (on a purely amateur level), someone recommended "Experiencing Architecture". I could not be happier with this book. The author consistently uses simple, concrete and engaging examples to illustrate his points. He compares and contrasts; uses buildings, sidewalks, windows, doorways, and steps from all over the world and across the centuries. Given my love of travel and history these references (liberally

illustrated throughout the book in black and white photographs and some drawings) brought the book to life and added an additional dimension of enjoyment. The reviews printed on the back cover say it all- "Lively without ever becoming condescending...learned without ever becoming dull" and "...so lucid and clear that every layman and beginner will be able to understand and to enjoy it". I can't recommend the book enough for anyone that has even the slightest interest in learning about architecture.

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 they 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.

Good for beginner architects. Rasmussen made my summer vacation very pleasant with *Experiencing Architecture*. The introduction of very key elements, such as Corbusier's modular system forces the reader to explore further the many varying conditions of architecture. Worth every penny.

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.

Experiencing Architecture, 2nd Edition In spite of its age the book is still like a bible for people interested in architecture and used a lot in education. The language is not too complicated, its not too technical and there are a lot of simple but good illustrations.

This book was required reading for my introductory class on architecture. I was debating whether I should be an architect or not and this influenced me to pursue it. It is one of those rare theory books that I had fond memories of reading. Rasmussen, unlike most writers, is very even handed in his presentation and doesn't steer the reader into any particular style. He provides the reader with a clearer understanding of architecture and the role of architects in shaping the built environment.

Experiencing Architecture was a basic text in my first year of design school; the principles that I learned from it have followed me ever since. Rasmussen takes the visual world apart and taught me to see things in their simplest forms. His commentaries on form, texture, and massing heightened my appreciation for all forms of design; his discussion of color--for one who is colorblind--provided a life-long guidedog. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wanted to pioneer the Lego curriculum at university--

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 friendsâ |.

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