



Architectural Composition

By Rob Krier

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Architectural Composition is both a theoretical and visual analysis which clearly illustrates the creative process which informs Krier's vision and praxis. The culmination of a lifetime's thought and experience by one of Europe's most important architectural theorists, it is without doubt a major achievement and is a standard work of reference for both students and practising architects. The book, published for the first time in 1988 by Academy Editions in London, has been supported by funds from the Fond zur Forderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung der Republik Osterreich, and it was carried out at Krier's former Institut fur Gestaltungslehre at the Technische Universitat in Vienna.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Something of a maverick in architectural circles, Vienna-based architect Krier (*Urban Space*) finds most modern buildings ugly and banal, yet he looks to Le Corbusier for guiding principles on linking form to function. Rejecting "organic" architecture inspired by Antonio Gaudi, Krier upholds principles of symmetry and geometry; eclectically, he seeks out examples of good design as he moves from a Yugoslavian fishmarket to an ancient Hindu temple. This chunky primer attempts to formulate a set of ground rules for architects and builders, yet when Krier gets to a discussion of proportions, he throws up his hands, exclaiming, "There are no rules . . . only experience can help us"; he then follows up with minutely detailed analyses of proportions in the human face, seashells, Gothic cathedrals and da Vinci's sketches of horses. Lively, very readable, combative, this delightful tome is generously illustrated with hundreds of photographs, sketches and lovingly shaded color drawings that illuminate key points.

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From Library Journal

We have come full circle. Seventy-five years ago, at the height of the academic, or Beaux Arts, period in Western architecture, books on architectural composition abounded, spreading the gospel of academic design from Paris to the hinterlands. This book, by an internationally known architect and professor at the Technical University of Vienna, harkens back to this period, parsing its approach into discrete operations and elements based on precedent. The approach is typological rather than holistic or technological, thereby throwing off the yoke of design as a species of problem solving that characterized so much colorless architecture in the mid-20th century. For architectural pedagogy as a primer on design. Peter Kaufman, Sch. of Architecture, Florida A & M Univ., Tallahassee

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