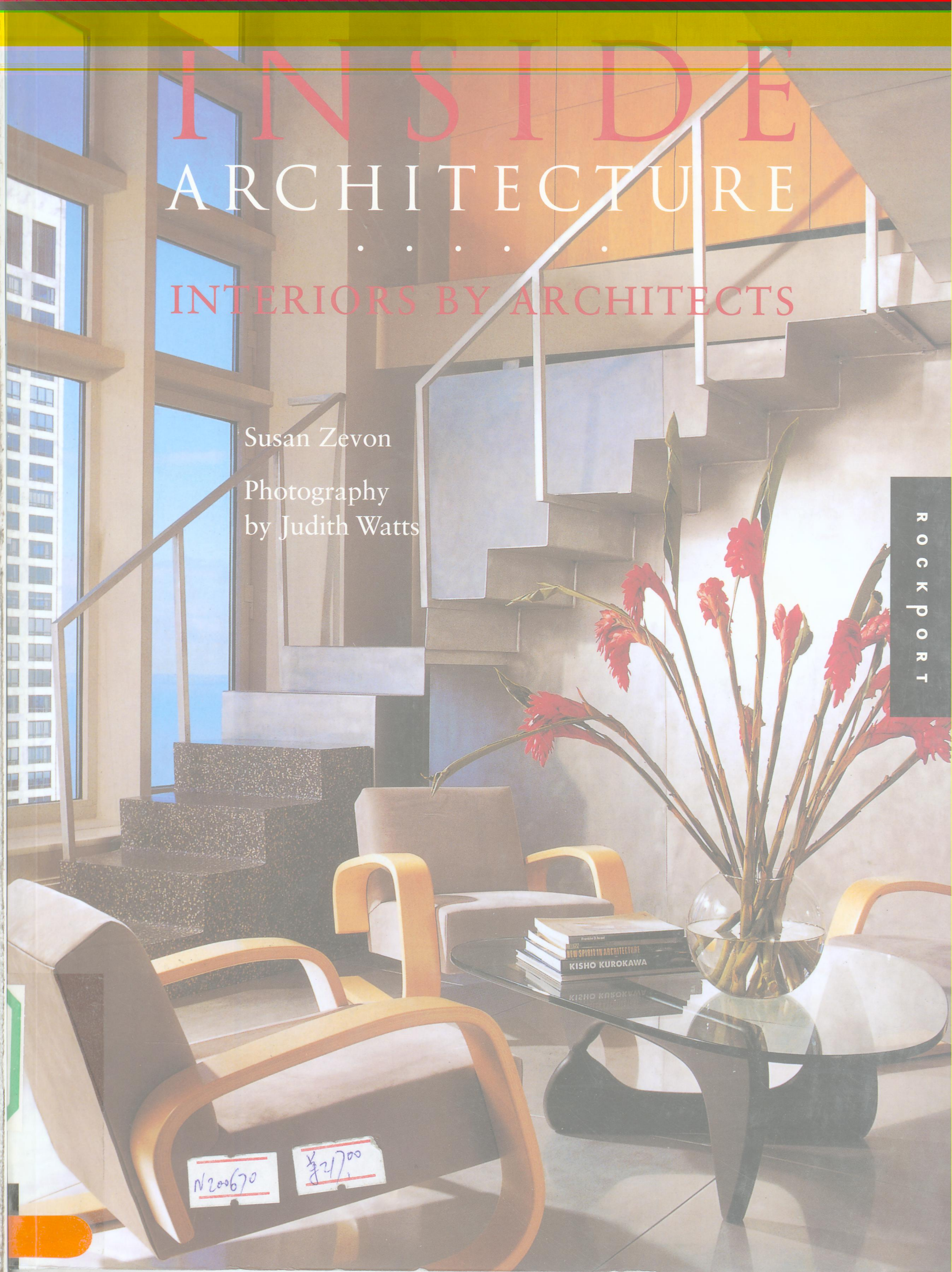
INSIDE ARCHITECTURE

INTERIORS BY ARCHITECTS

Susan Zevon

Photography
by Judith Watts

ROCKPORT



INSIDE ARCHITECTURE

DEDICATION

To the beloved memory of my adorable father, Louis Zevon, and to my amazing mother, an inspiration for all who have the good fortune to meet her, Rhea Alter Zevon, with great love and gratitude, I dedicate this book. My eternal thanks to them for making me believe that against all odds, I could achieve what I set my mind to, and then praying it would be for something worthwhile.

INSIDE ARCHITECTURE

INTERIORS BY ARCHITECTS

SUSAN ZEVON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUDITH WATTS

ROCKPORT

First published in the United States of America by:
Rockport Publishers, Inc.
33 Commercial Street
Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930-5089
Telephone: (978) 282-9590
Fax: (978) 283-2742
www.rockpub.com

ISBN 1-56496-698-4

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Design: Sawyer Design Associates, Inc.
Designers: Diane Sawyer, Rebecca Sagen
Front Cover Photograph: see page 43
Back Cover Photographs: *(top to bottom)* see page 178, see page 33, see page 105

Printed in Hong Kong

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS BOOK HAS, FOR MANY YEARS, been an idea in my head, a pursuit and a goal that withstood many reversals. Without the help of many talented and patient people it would never have become a reality. First of all, Judith Watts, whose photographs enhance this book's pages, and I thank all the architects whose work was an inspiration and who generously contributed to the project. We are indebted to their clients, who welcomed us into their homes and gave us insight into how the projects reached fruition. Our thanks to Jennie McGregor Bernard, who enthusiastically guided it through initial phases, and to our agent, Barbara Hogenson, who continued to believe in this book through many setbacks. We are very appreciative of the support of Rockport Publishers, Inc., who gave this book life, especially to the acquistions editor, Rosalie Grattaroti, who remained unceasingly enthusiastic about the project right from our initial conversation, to our editor, Shawna Mullen, and art director, Lynne Havighurst.

During the years of work I was blessed with many loyal and talented friends who were always there with advice and encouragement. They are too numerous to mention all by name, but in particular I thank Kaaren Parker Gray, the best stylist I know, who generously gave many innovative suggestions and much encouragement; Robert Lautman, a photographer and veteran of similar projects who lent his guidance; Ann Morris, who patiently listened to many late night conversations and always offered good counsel; Carol Moskowitz, a true, long-term friend; and Elizabeth Winchester, an accomplished interior designer and the best neighbor anyone could ask for. My thanks to the dedicated and supportive staff at House Beautiful, who took a great interest in this project and from whom I have learned so much during my years on staff; and to my first mentor in architectural journalism, Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron.

Most of all I thank my loving family: my sister, Barbara Zevon Berlin, and my brother-in-law, Donald Berlin, who generously gave their support and professional skills to this book; to my kind and wise nephews, Geoffrey Berlin and Eric Berlin, who have been a great source of advice and laughter; and above all my dear parents, Rhea and Louis Zevon, to whom this book is dedicated with very great love.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

HAVING BEEN THE EDITOR of several magazines that report on architecture, design, and decoration, I am particularly interested in the way architecture works, inside as well as out. I like not only to be able to "read" the interior from the exterior forms of a house, but I love to study the floor plans and see how the network of rooms and passages come alive as beautiful, personal, individual environments.

No wonder I was delighted to discover that a colleague of mine was working on *Inside Architecture,* a book on interior design by architects. Here would be a book that would look at houses as I do, not only as a form in a landscape, important as that may be, but also as a complex composition of spaces, objects, and artifacts, as well as personal taste and style. And the author is an architectural editor I know very well.

I first met Susan Zevon in the 1970s at *House & Garden* where she was assistant editor for architecture. Later I became editor-in-chief of *House & Garden,* and Susan joined the staff of *House Beautiful* as architecture editor. Ultimately I became the editor-in-chief of *House Beautiful,* where my work with Susan continues to this day.

She shares my passion for houses and, as this book will reveal, her years in the field have taught her that no one vision dominates it. There are many design points of view to *Inside Architecture.*

The rooms architects create for themselves, as well as those they design for other people, include an amazing variety of visual and aesthetic experiences. For designers like Buzz Yudell and Tina Beebe, a house is clearly a place for comfortable living in close proximity to nature; for their mentor Charles Moore, houses and their interior spaces were exuberant exercises in *joie de vivre*; for Charles Gwathmey, architecture is an opportunity to work with the beauty of classic modernism; while Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown embrace broad choices in both design and decoration.

Some of the examples in this book push the stylistic envelope, many of them found in urban lofts and other new forms of residential architecture. Examples include the work of younger designers like James Hong, Frederic Schwartz, and the Hariri sisters, Gisue and Mojgan.

Still others are more traditional: the home Peter Pennoyer created for his parents, the house Lee Mindel designed for himself, Hugh Newell Jacobsen's work for clients and his own family.

But then, as Hugh Jacobsen's introduction to this book reminds us, the tradition of architects orchestrating all aspects of a house goes all the way back to Robert Adam, continues through the arts and crafts tradition of the Greene brothers, to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, and his polar opposite, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Whatever the design point of view, we can all learn from the way architects handle the interiors of the houses and apartments they design. And I, for one, never tire of the variety, creativity, and originality Susan Zevon finds in her coverage of architecture, and that she and her photographer and collaborator Judith Watts have documented for *Inside Architecture.*

Louis Oliver Gropp
Editor-in-Chief
House Beautiful

INTRODUCTION

HOW DO YOU DESIGN AN EMPTY ROOM? Everything an architect does, really, is concerned with the making of spaces. The size and relationship of these spaces is the result of predetermined programmatic themes suggested (or dictated) by the client and the site. The placement of furniture and the selection of colors and fabrics are part of the design process, and, as everyone knows, it is a worthless effort that produces a space without purpose.

The work illustrated in this book addresses interior spaces designed as architecture by architects. These spaces are appointed with furniture, rugs, objects, and colors specified or designed by them as well. These rooms are at peace with themselves because there is the pervasive evidence of order. Without order there can be no architecture.

The work herein is varied and personal. Some interiors are sparse and some filled, but all are strong, livable and innately beautiful. The architects of the work shown are active practitioners, and the projects included have been completed, for the most part, in the past decade. Some of this work continues to evolve, as architects are always moving and restudying the problem at hand.

It was not until the early Renaissance that architects were seen to turn over the interior shell of their building to decorative artists. Still, the majority of the great interiors in architecture's past were designed and accomplished by the same architect that designed the building. The work that was accomplished by these architects influenced the times and often buildings designed by others that followed them.

In order to create a sense of place, it is imperative for the architect to be responsible for as much of the visual environment related to the building as is possible. Therefore, it is of little surprise that—historically—most serious architects have designed their own interiors. A brief overview of those architects, whose special contributions and influence have carried over the past two hundred and fifty years and continue to the present day, is, I believe, worth noting in this introduction.

The work of Robert Adam in late eighteenth-century England was so thorough and so complete that the results were judged "flawless" by contemporaries. Through his efforts the rigors of Palladian neo-classicism were made more linear and taut. Within the spaces he encouraged and experimented with the play of natural light. He boldly brought a new meaning to interior spaces and their innate progressive relationships to one another. From beaded and polychromed plaster walls and ceilings through the white and crisp simplifications of Greek and Roman prototypical moldings, fireplaces and surprisingly large windows, to chairs, sideboards, beds, rugs and even chandeliers, Robert Adam created a total and strong environment that never contradicted itself.

For the first time, the architecture both within and without became one. A comparison of this interior exterior relationship and the unity created by Adam is at the same time possible with the architecture of France under Louis XVI. It was in seventeenth-century France that "Interior Architects" first appeared. They, of course, were trained architects who were specialists in what the Renaissance had brought into existence: the Decorative Arts.

The architect, who traditionally is responsible not only for the exterior form and its proportion and scale and the arrangement of the hierarchy of spaces within, but also for the complete science of building, which earlier concerned itself with structure and being comfortably warm and water-tight, later took on the regimens of the industrial revolution. It was not until the early Renaissance that the concept of the placement of objects and furniture began to be incorporated into the architect's realm of responsibility. Prior to this time, the design of the structure and its resultant spaces was the

chief responsibility of the architect. Overwhelmed, the architect encouraged and supported the arrival of a true colleague, educated and responsible for the interiors.

Thomas Jefferson, who was perhaps the last true Renaissance man, is a rich example of the architect's pursuit of total control. At Monticello, the ingenious doors, writing tables, beds, let alone the relationship of one to the other, are, of course, one with the architecture. The interior spaces and quality of light within fulfill the promise made by the view of the building when first seen from the approaching road. Monticello is one within and without—the brilliant effort of a brilliant architectural scholar turned amateur architect.

It is in the spirit of this book to recognize and refer to the influential work of the nineteenth-century American architects whose legacy is apparent herein. The contemporary efforts of Benjamin Henry Latrobe and the disciplines of the Greek Revival in the early decades of the nineteenth century express his concern for the continuity of purpose, from interior column capitals of corn and tobacco leaves through the scale and echo of this new order and into the furnishings themselves. The clarity and purpose of interior spaces, with light and scale of furnishings clearly reinforcing the order of solid and void inherent in Andalusia, the great house near Philadelphia, must be recalled at this time.

The endeavors of the highly creative and prolific architect Stanford White are perhaps the clearest example of the efforts architects have extended in their pursuit of their art. One can sense in nearly every Stanford White building the presence of his eye. The rich legacy of his work has been cherished beyond its brilliant execution of Beaux Arts disciplines to include spaces that are at once grand and simple, whose interiors are filled with objects that play off one another like a fugue. From picture frames, fabrics, furniture and juxtaposition of disparate forms, Stanford White's genius remains dominant and, a fact that is hardly surprising, still continues to carry the day.

The Arts and Crafts Movement, and it truly was that in both Europe and America in the late nineteenth-century, had an influence, though he denied it, upon the genius of Frank Lloyd Wright. It evolved in Britain in the 1880s and was a reaction against a century of mass production and the havoc it had wrought. It encouraged a revival of the concept of medieval guilds and hand-crafted objects of lasting beauty and utility. In England the leadership of Ruskin moved naturally through William Morris and almost immediately included the creative efforts of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, C. R. Ashbee and the classicist, Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens.

Not surprisingly, the great American genius, Frank Lloyd Wright, breathed deeply of this creative air. From this, Wright created a design philosophy that he called "Organic Architecture." This was based on an underlying and essential unity of program, site, plan, elevation, structure, ornament, furniture and materials. This, not unlike Adam and the others above, led Wright to conceive buildings in their totality and, accordingly, he designed interiors, furniture, metal work, ceramics, stained glass, textiles, lighting, and murals wherever possible. The English Arts and Crafts Movement inspired the anti-urban, utopian guild spirit of the American Gustav Stickley in Syracuse, New York, whose work Wright privately espoused but publicly denied, as he did all possible influence from Japan, through Mayan, up to and including the Arts and Crafts.

The Viennese architect Joseph Hoffman, whose furniture is more well known than his few works of architecture, exercised control over his projects with the same purpose and intent that strong architects have been stressing in order to establish a complete visual order and, therefore, a sense of place and innate beauty. His furniture and interior spaces continue their influence nearly a century later and clearly echo the popular movements in design on both sides of the Atlantic before the Great War.

Between the World Wars, architects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer, Peter Berens, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Alvar Aalto contributed architecture and interiors both recognizable and familiar to the theme of this book. Eero Saarinen, Charles Eames and George Nelson, to name only a few of the post–World War II architects, have not only contributed to our society and culture through their buildings, but through their design of furniture and interiors as well. The impact of mass production for a mass market drove these architects to wed the new technology with their architecture. Widely acclaimed and received by a broad populace eager for change, the efforts of these architects are now referred to as "classic" in the face of fashion. The fact that these same efforts were immediately accepted by the general populace and professional colleagues as "good" seems of less importance.

Today, the furniture and objects designed by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Gisue Hariri and Mojgan Hariri, Charles Gwathmey and Robert Siegel, are broadly marketed to reach out beyond a single building and to bring that order and its beauty to thousands of other interiors. There is no question that the contributions made by these architects will continue to maintain the ever important contribution to our culture and society.

While most, if not all, the other architects whose interiors are specifically addressed herein design furniture, the chairs, sofas, tables, interiors, and furniture designed by Stanley Tigerman and Margaret McCurry, Michael Graves, Charles Moore and Arthur Andersson have made a strong contribution that continues and renews again the complete role of the architect. The study of the design of interiors and furniture by architects is the close-up study of the works of these architects. The fine detailing of this work is getting close to the core of their thoughts.

Architecture and design is a vast subject involving all of man's endeavors. It is important to understand that architects have always been designing not only the forms and resulting interior spaces but the color, furnishings and other objects vital to the concept and purpose of each building.

That the human figure is the most important object in a work of architecture is self-evident and is mentioned here only as a point of beginning in forming a philosophy, if you will, in the approach to the design of interiors. It therefore follows that the architecture and the inherent spaces within should be designed as backgrounds to man—backgrounds that make man look not only good, but better.

—Hugh Newell Jacobsen

ROBERT VENTURI & DENISE SCOTT BROWN

Liberating Architecture

THROUGH THEIR WRITING, teaching, and design work, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown have forged upon the landscape their vision of what Venturi proclaims to be the truth of an architecture of complexity and contradiction: a "unity of inclusion rather than the easy unity of exclusion." Nowhere is this vision more apparent than in their own home in suburban Philadelphia, where they have lived since 1971.

In the early years of their marriage, the couple frequently passed by an "almost art nouveau" mansion on their way to visit Venturi's mother, who lived in the house he had designed for her—now considered an icon of twentieth-century architecture. Completed in 1964, the small house signaled the revival of historical references, ornament, and color at a time when pure modernism was almost universally accepted as the only "correct" architectural style. With its tall chimney and large picture window, the design looks hauntingly familiar. The little house posed big questions: Why shouldn't a house look like a house? Could the popular also be art?

Two years after his mother's house was completed, Venturi's book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* was published. It became a doctrine of liberation from the corporate glass box that had prevailed in American architecture since World War II. In the first chapter, "Nonstraightforward Architecture: A Gentle Manifesto," Venturi wrote, "I am for messy vitality over obvious unity. I include the non sequitur and proclaim the duality." Like the pop artists, Venturi and Scott Brown put the familiar in a new context, enabling us to view it with fresh eyes. Unlike many of their contemporaries who disdained decoration, they revived the interest in interior design that had characterized earlier architects. Today not only city plans and eminent projects such as the Seattle Museum and an addition to the National Gallery of Art in London bear the signature of Venturi and Scott Brown, but also furniture, rugs, and tableware.

Venturi describes their own house as a combination of Jugendstil, English arts and crafts, and the Continental art nouveau, a suitable choice for architects who "like elements that are hybrid rather than pure." Scott Brown and Venturi had been living in a one-bedroom apartment in I. M. Pei's concrete-and-glass Society Hill Towers, but in 1971, the arrival of their son, Jimmie, and the acquisition of four truckloads of furniture from Atlantic City's old Traymore Hotel (which was about to be demolished) made larger quarters a necessity. They heard that the "almost art nouveau" house was for sale, and it held a strong attraction for them both. Scott Brown liked being able to see right through the house to the vista of a 300-foot rolling lawn in the back. It reminded her of the broad vistas she had grown up with in her parents' international-style house in South Africa.

Puzzled by the mansion's ambiguous style, they discovered that the house had been built in 1910 to the designs of Milton B. Medary for a German family, who probably had requested something reminiscent of the houses they had known in Germany. Venturi and Scott Brown were at first intimidated by its size but reasoned that it could serve as both townhouse and country home. It would provide abundant room for the extended family they wanted to establish: a changing guard of architecture students to serve as "handy people," other helpers, friends, family, and an Airedale. "The house allows us to lead the life we do," Scott Brown says.

It took them ten years to bring the house back from its dreary condition wrought by someone the previous owner had described as a "famous decorator." They removed the "violent" wallpapers and sold all the "vulgar" chandeliers. The handsome architectural bones once again were revealed, providing a sympathetic setting for the sizable collection of hotel furniture, which

Venturi describes as "beyond art nouveau and pre-deco." Like the furniture he inherited from his mother, the hotel furniture also bore a childhood connection. As a teenager, Venturi had been friendly with the hotel owner's children and had learned about the furniture.

Once the offensive wallpapers had been removed, Venturi and Scott Brown found the painted walls a bit bland. Over the years, they and a retinue of young assistants stenciled the walls, adding layer upon layer of decoration. With time they acquired some art nouveau furniture, which they juxtaposed with contemporary furniture and objects. Many pieces were designed by themselves and by friends. They have continued to add paintings, sculpture, and layer upon layer of books, magazines, and catalogs so that the house visually resounds with Venturi's reply to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's famous statement, "Less is more." "Less is a bore," Venturi wrote, and so he and Scott Brown have lived.

Venturi and Scott Brown have restored the original mission-style woodwork in the large entry hall. Wood-framed glass doors that face the front door open to the living room. Geometric stencils on the walls pick up the mix of colors from the Mercer tile floor, original to the house.

In a corner of the living room, a chair designed by Frederic Schwartz for Venturi and Scott Brown's son stands between a red chair designed by Venturi and an orange plastic stacking chair designed by Joe Colombo. A floor lamp by Louis C. Tiffany stands next to the art nouveau cabinet.