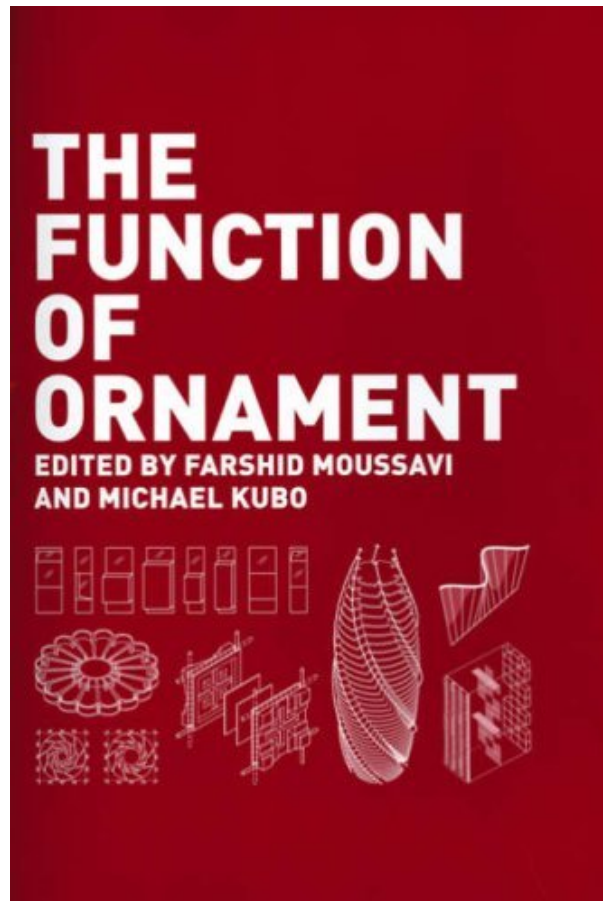


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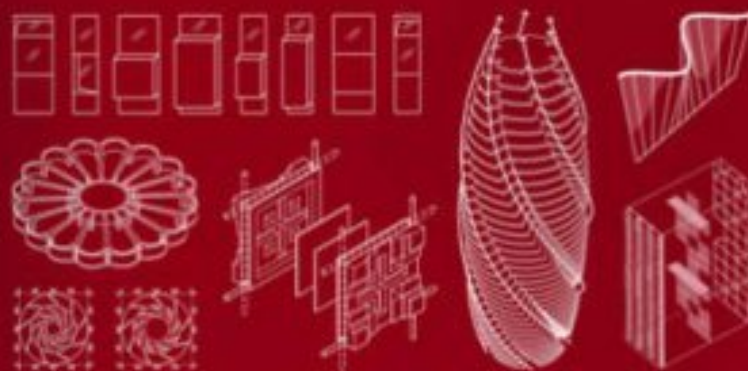


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THE FUNCTION OF ORNAMENT

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Review

This book represents a return to architectural research as drawing. If it's a harbinger for 2007, I'm excited to see what else Actar and whoever else dares to draw can come up with. --Archinect

The Function of Ornament is a primer for the digital age, with Foreign Office Architects Farshid Moussavi demonstrating how the computer is as fine a form generator as any pattern book. --Wallpaper Magazine

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Architecture needs mechanisms that allow it to become connected to culture. It achieves this by continually capturing the forces that shape society as material to work with. Architecture's materiality is therefore a composite one, made up of visible forces (structural, functional, physical) as well as invisible forces (cultural, political, temporal). Architecture progresses through new concepts that connect with these forces, manifesting itself in new aesthetic compositions and affects. Ornament is the by-product of this process, through which architectural material is organized to transmit unique affects.

This book is a graphic guide to ornaments in the twentieth century. It unveils the function of ornament as the agent for specific affects, dismantling the idea that ornament is applied to buildings as a discrete or non-essential entity. Each case operates through greater or lesser depth to exploit specific synergies between the exterior and the interior, constructing an internal order between ornament and material. These internal orders produce expressions that are contemporary, yet whose affects are resilient in time.

- Sales Rank: #569923 in Books
- Published on: 2016-11-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .0" h x .0" w x .0" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 192 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

Nice presentation of some innovative architectural systems

By Emcee

In this graphic guide to building ornamentation in the twentieth century, Moussavi and Kubo have collected an interesting cross-section of architectural projects that demonstrate the mechanisms through which contemporary architecture connects itself to current culture.

Through the selected case study projects, the editors endeavor to illustrate the means through which ornamentation is the very essence of the building. Not being merely 'ornamental' and self-indulgent, the articulation presented is indeed the agent of the architect's ideas.

Various materials and effects are investigated ranging from 'dematerialized light' to 'relief patterns'. The impressive array of diagrams are extremely clear and useful. A typical system is defined through perspective views, sections, pattern diagrams, detailed assembly drawings and relevant notes.

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5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent and Elegant

By archiman

This is not a technical manual as a couple reviewers seems to wish, nor a survey of ornament in architecture. Nor does it ever claim to be such--reviewers should review a book not wish it was a different book. Instead it represents the results of graduate level research at Harvard Graduate School of Design into a revitalized understanding of the role of ornament in architecture and how one employs technical and material means to

produce architecture effects and phenomena. As such the book is extremely clear, useful and elegantly designed and thoughtfully organized. Great for students and professional who want to think.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Nicely put together

By Joongwon Lee

I guess, to me at least, the title of the book is bit misleading,

it should be "how to make an interesting building skins"

Because this book provides ample examples of great building skins of contemporary (some past) architecture.

Graphics, analysis, and categorization are the 3 strong points of the book.

Each example is analyzed in the order of following:

1. elements (typically material)
2. key design concept
3. organization and assembly of key building skin
4. overall effect

For example, for Laban Dance Center by Herzog de Meuron, three different colors and glasses are introduced, how they are used according to the program inside, how the glasses are put together as double-layer enclosure, and the daytime/ nighttime effects are analyzed.

The book speaks with graphics, limiting the number of words used.

The graphics were painstakingly achieved. Really delivering the message clearly and concisely. Hence, essence of the project concept is easily graspable, yet, at the same time, being graphics, it leaves room for subjective interpretation.

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