



The Function of Ornament

By Farshid Moussavi

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The Function of Ornament By Farshid Moussavi

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.

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Editorial Review

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

-- A remarkable array of forms. --Metropolis Magazine

Undeniably powerful. -- Architect's Journal

A compelling study of affect manifest in clearly presented case studies with savvy representations of various architectural techniques. --Documents

A thoroughly and beautifully illustrated book that gives a broad overview of the various affects achieved by mostly contemporary buildings. --Archidose

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The impressive array of diagrams are extremely clear and useful... If you are looking for component and systems analysis of projects such as Future Systems' amorphous Selfridges Department Store or Herzog and de Meuron's embossed copper skin at the De Young Museum; look no further. --Death By Architecture

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About the Author

Farshid Moussavi is Professor in Practice in the Department of Architecture, Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Her London-based firm, Foreign Office Architects (FOA), is recognized as one of the most creative design firms in the world, deftly integrating architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture in their projects. They have produced numerous critically-acclaimed and award-winning international projects, most notably the Yokohama Ferry Terminal in Japan. Prior to establishing Foreign Office Architects (with Alejandro Zaera Polo) in London in 1992, she worked with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop in Genoa and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture in Rotterdam. Michael Kubo is Teaching Associate in Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design and the US Director of ACTAR. He graduated with an M.Arch from the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and with a B.A. in Architecture from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. With ACTAR, he is the editor of *Desert America: Territory of Paradox* (2006), *Verb Conditioning* (2005), *Seattle Public Library* (2005), *Verb Connection and Verb Matters* (2004), *Phylogenesis: FOA's Ark* (2003), and *The Yokohama Project* (2002). He previously collaborated with Rem Koolhaas and OMA / AMO as Associate Editor for the *Harvard Guide to Shopping*

(2001), Great Leap Forward (2001), and Mutations (2000).

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