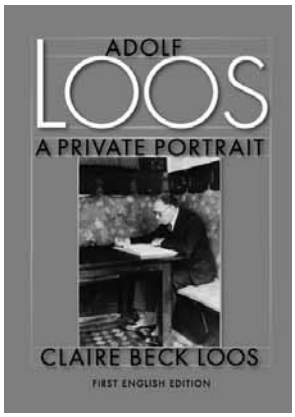
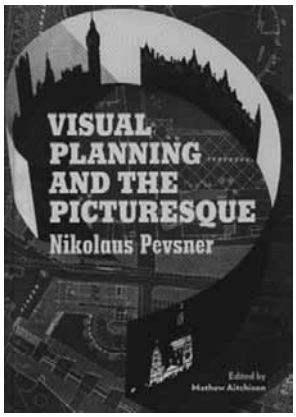
Pen portraits of the Modern

Innocent labours



Adolf Loos. A Private Portrait
Claire Beck Loos
DoppelHouse Press
Los Angeles, 2011
200 pp.
ISBN: 098-325-400-1
£35 (hb)

Published in 1935 to raise money for Loos's tomb this book has been reprinted several times in German but never before appeared in English. Thirty-four years his junior, Claire Beck Loos was his last wife and her account of their less than four years together is neither conventional biography nor history. Emulating Loos's own increasingly aphoristic literary style she presents an episodic succession of fascinating snapshots of the architect's daily life and ideas. He emerges as by turns magisterial and tyrannical, generous with suitably authentic gifts – he sent a Princess a peasant's jug of honey – and unafraid to put a pretentious client in their place. Asked to provide a larger buffet in a dining room, he retorted: 'I find that the larger the buffet, the more stupid the woman is!' An utterly engaging account of a vivid life with Loos.
RW

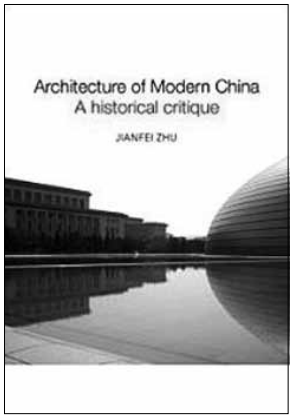


Visual Planning and the Picturesque
Nikolaus Pevsner
Ed. by Mathew Aitchison
Getty Research Institute
Los Angeles, 2010
221 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-60606-001-8
£21.95 (hb)

If the Picturesque is a British eighteenth-century invention this edited book, with an extended critical introduction, of Nikolaus Pevsner's (1902–83) unpublished manuscript on *Visual Planning and the Picturesque* is further evidence of the German émigré's role in reinvigorating the tradition for post-war urban thinking in Britain – ideas best known nowadays through Gordon Cullen's *Townscape* (1961). Although *Visual Planning* never appeared in book form, much of its content appeared as journal articles in the *Architectural Review* in the 1940s and 1950s when Pevsner was editor. John Macarthur and Mathew Aitchison's rich introduction shows the crucial role of Hubert de Cronin Hastings – as chief editor and owner of the *Review* – in commissioning the book in 1942, and in promulgating these picturesque Modernist townscape themes; the manuscript is dedicated 'To H de C without whose spiritual and material support this book would not have been conceived nor written'.

Without having to seek out from *Architectural Reviews* the article versions of this thinking, many readers will especially enjoy having between firm boards – and published to the high standards of the Getty Research Institute – Pevsner's own interpretations of 'sequential vision', in his photo-narrative tours (sepia images of car-few streets) of Oxford, London's Lincoln's Inn, and Bath.
SK

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1359135511000613 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Architecture of Modern China: A Historical Critique
Jianfei Zhu
Routledge
London, 2008
336 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-415-45781-1
£34.99 (pb)

To Western architects, contemporary China is an enigma. In recession-hit times, European and American practices are keen to find work in the country, while numerous Chinese clients are keen to exploit Western brands of expertise. Yet the ethics of mutual engagement are uncertain. The idea of a 'managed economy' seems a *non sequitur*; and high-profile detentions like that of Ai Weiwei will cause even enthusiastic Western collaborators at least pause for thought. Jianfei Zhu's book provides a welcome orientation for English-speaking architects interested in China. Structured around nine essays, each focused on a significant 'moment' in Chinese architectural culture, its breadth is ambitious. It ranges from the import of perspective and Euclidean geometry, to the emergence of an architectural profession and the arrival of Modernism, to ideas of developing criticality. One chapter includes other voices (George Baird, Peter Eisenman, Michael Speaks) and the final essay attempts to map the shifts in Chinese architecture from 1910 to 2010 according to 'five mountain ranges and twenty plateaus'. Any western architect contemplating a Chinese adventure should read this book.
AS



Green Building Through Integrated Design
Jerry Yudelson
McGraw-Hill
New York, 2008
261 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-07-154601-0
£34.99 (hb)

Publications focusing on the meaning, aesthetics, technologies and practicalities of sustainable design have been the focus of the majority of 'green' built environment publications over the past decades. However, there is, rightly, a growing concern that despite an emerging understanding of what can be done to deliver sustainability, there is far less consideration of how the process of design might need to be altered and developed to allow this transformation in practice to occur; namely early stage interdisciplinary design processes.

This work attempts to respond to this gap in knowledge by narrating the practical experience of the author in the US in the delivery of LEED rated buildings. The 'Integrated Design Process' explored here, through interviews and case studies, provides a framework in which professionals are provided with scope and importantly time to work effectively as a team to deliver project specific, effective and appropriate green design. Keys to this process include practices that include the use of the familiar design charrette, shown to be embedded in an effective design process and support for team working across the key actors from the earliest possible phase of the project. Despite the inevitable US focus of this publication, the content provides much to be considered to enable the delivery of effective and integrated sustainable design.
JG



Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England
Joanna Picciotto
Harvard University Press
Cambridge, MA/London, 2010
880 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-674-04906-2
£36.95 (hb)

This book is a must have for anyone working on the English seventeenth and early eighteenth century in any cultural field. Its disciplinary home is literature – the book centres on a critique of Milton – but in taking a broad look at the culture of work, it encompasses much else. The central motif is Adam digging his garden – the apogee of innocent labour. The theme is expanded through the consideration of the changes in epistemology of the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century – the rise and fall of the experimentalism. Bacon and the Royal Society receive much pertinent scrutiny, as does the recent historiography of the scientific culture of the period. Religious and philosophical questions are also addressed. The writing is precise and hugely entertaining – it is delightful that words like 'grunt-work', 'perky' and 'cringeworthy' can find their way into a discussion of the milieu of Robert Boyle.
JAO

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