

ARCHITECTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

BY PHILIP ODIDI

Pulled from Taschen's new series on the architecture of nations, this treatise covers notable work across the Lower 48 (apparently nobody bothers to build interesting structures in Alaska or Hawaii). Seventeen architects and firms are profiled, ranging from the notable – Richard Meier, Morphosis and Frank Gehry (in America's continuing quest to claim the Canadian architect as its own) – to such up-and-comers as Michael Jantzen and Jones Partners: Architecture. Intended as an overview of recent architecture, the volume is notable for its inclusion of lesser-known projects, for every iconic Gehry bandshell (in Chicago's Millennium Park), there is a Rural Studio bird-watching tower (in a park in central Alabama). The rightness of including German and French translations of project descriptions and photo captions is muted by the poor choice of textual presentation. Readers will quickly discover that the only effective way to read white text on shiny silver paper without being blinded by glare is to read in the dark – making this the perfect gift for anyone with cats or opossums literate in at least one of the three featured languages.

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