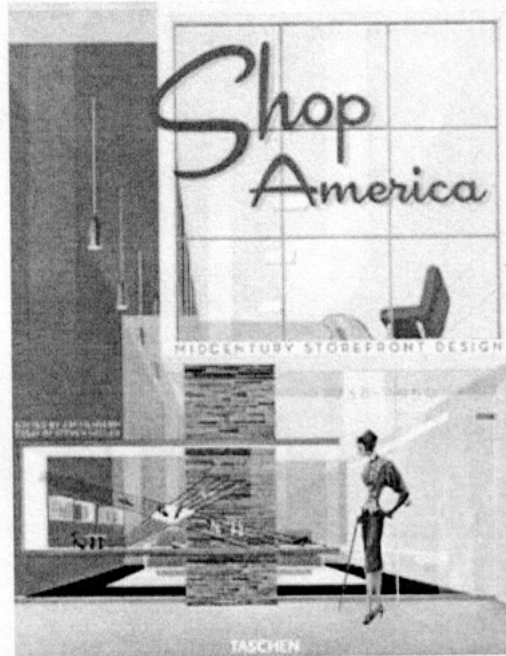


"Shop America: Midcentury Storefront Design 1938-1950" by Edited by Jim Heimann, Essay by Steven Heller

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Following both World War I and II, American spirit was focused on the future- a fabulous and fantastic unknown, which was certain to be exciting, wondrous, and larger-than-life. The design of those times followed in this vein; from cars to clothing, houses to restaurants, furniture and more. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the architecture and design of modern American storefronts.

At the time, shopping represented an escape (and still does for many); Americans wanted everything to be big, bold, and uplifting, and storefront designers were going to give it to

them. **Shop America: Midcentury Storefront Design** presents the exciting, bright, dramatic, and often whimsical designs of American storefronts from 1938 to 1950 with a style and flair that sets these icons off perfectly. Featuring hundreds of full-color architectural renderings of storefront designs alongside black and white photos of actual storefronts, the book not only brings readers back into another time, it allows you to feel the emotions and excitement that these shoppers must have felt when walking along the new grand avenues of big cities.

Whether offering-up shoes or suits, airplanes or cameras, the facades for these stores are bold, bright, uplifting and not least of all, dramatic. Meant to invoke feelings of power, hope, excitement and a bright future, the designers and architects behind these storefronts understood their clients and the desires of the public. Also impressive is the incorporation of new building techniques and materials previously unavailable- or prohibitively expensive- being put to use in a revved-up post-war economy.

While the renderings in *Shop America* are certainly beautiful, don't skip the essay in favor of simply flipping through the drawings, Steven Heller offers an insightful look into the background of the period as well as the influences on design and the way that they were carried out.

Shop America is a beautiful book easily displayed on a coffee table or bookshelf. It's bright cover and cheerful drawings will not only attract fans of architecture, design and shopping, but also anyone with a keen eye, a penchant for American pop culture or history, and those just looking for a fun little distraction.

Taschen, 241 pages, \$49.99