



Calatrava: Complete Works 1979-2007

Philip Jodidio.

Taschen, £79.99

Santiago Calatrava has come to prominence due to bridges such as Campo Volantín (Bilbao) and the Bridge of Europe (Orléans). While his bridges reflect his immense architectural talents, they also demonstrate his skills as an artist and an engineer. Jodidio's book strives to emphasise this point throughout in order to create a better understanding of Calatrava's work and place his architecture in the context of his art, where nature meets engineering. His work for the Olympic Sports Complex in Athens perfectly symbolises his ability to mix all three to produce outstanding pieces of architecture. The design for the roof of the Olympic Stadium was done in such a way that the majority of it could be completed off-site, demonstrating the mind of an engineer. Yet Calatrava's sketches reflect the role that art had to play in his design as the images of human figures taking part in athletic competition, and the way the body moves, can be seen as influencing the curvature of the roof. The book contains over 35 of his projects, all of which have original sketches and are beautifully photographed. It is almost as if the reader is able to follow Calatrava's train of thought as he moves through the stages from basic sketches to completed project, such as with the Planetarium, Science Museum, and the L'Umbracle (Valencia). Numerous sketches involving the human eye evolve to create what appears to be a huge eye complete with blinking eyelid, or a moveable sunshade in this case. At 5.7 kilos and with over 500 pages containing hundreds of original sketches and specially produced watercolour drawings by Calatrava himself, this is no mere coffee table book. It is a book to inspire, to revel in and enjoy. Careful how you handle it though!

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