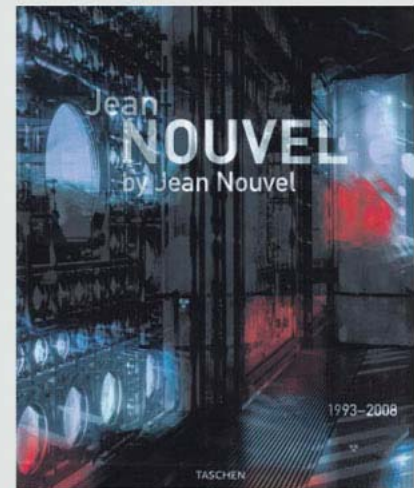


The monograph of a visionary

Not many architects would design their own monographs. Even fewer would spend five years working on it. But that is what Jean Nouvel, the 2008 Pritzker Prize winner, and the architect of the Louvre Abu Dhabi has done, conceiving the book's graphic design and choosing every image. The slipcover box gives the merest hint of what's inside, with its overlaid patterns (an echo the architect's fascination with layering, contrasts and shadows). Magnificent is probably the only word for this two-volume work, which – through a mixture of photographs, details of works-in-progress, and the architect's sketches and renderings – traces Nouvel's entire body

of work since 1970, when he set up his own practice in Paris. It begins with a biography-cum-essay by the author Philip Jodidio – which makes fascinating reading – followed by the architect's own Louisiana Manifesto. Then come Nouvel's little-known early houses in provincial France – radical for their time and a hint of things to come. And that's all here: l'Institut du Monde Arabe (1981-87) in Paris, which shot the architect to public prominence, the Cartier factory, Beijing Opera House, America's Cup building in Valencia and, finally, La Tour de Verre in New York, due for completion in 2012. Nothing less than a treasure for any lover of architecture. – SL



Jean Nouvel by Jean Nouvel

Taschen
£135 (Dh820)