

BOOK REVIEWS



The Public Private House. Modern Athens and Its Polykatoikia

Edited by Richard Woditsch
 Publisher: Park Books
 ISBN: 978-3038600848
 Language: English
 Year: 2019

Spectacular photos of Athens' dense urban morphology open *The Public-Private House*, a book dedicated to the study of the high-rise apartment buildings called *polykatoikia* - *poly* [many] + *katoikia* [dwelling] – and its Greek urban context. *Polykatoikia* is studied as a building type, as an urban phenomenon and as a spatial integrator.

In the first part, “Sea of White Cubes”, a photo essay offers a complete impression of Athens and its signature housing structure, followed by a collection of maps. The second part, “(How to Build) a Type”, investigates historical developments, the democratic process of planning in the city, and compares these buildings with Le Corbusier’s Dom-ino system, as well as with external factors such as social aspects and Athens’ strict building code. The third part, “Studies”, provides an illustrated analysis of Athens’ most notable examples of *polykatoikia* packed with detailed drawings (floor plans, sections, schemes of occupation and axonometries) revealing its diverse types of uses and atmospheres. The last part offers a perspective of current developments in Greece, contributing to these buildings’ transformation facing the 21st century.

Mafalda Pacheco



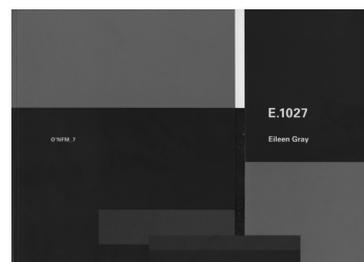
Beach Therapy

Author: Martin Parr
 Publisher: Damiani
 ISBN: 978-88-6208-625-7
 Language: English
 Year: 2018

The photographer Martin Parr is renowned for his documentation of seaside culture. At the single-page preface of *Beach Therapy*, launched in 2018 by Damiani, he affirms that beaches are places where people can really be themselves. He has often used these seaside spaces as a laboratory to experiment with new cameras and techniques.

This book is the outcome of Martin’s recent exploration using a telephoto lens and it presents a global perspective on the beaches he has photographed between 2014 and 2018. Made from a great distance, the images presented show, primarily, a wider view with smaller figures on the beach landscape creating a pattern of vivid colour. Flora and fauna frame some images with the beach as a background, creating a sort of a voyeuristic angle. Gradually, the images presented get closer and closer, in a sequencing that creates an intriguing narrative. It is an interesting portrait of the beach as a natural landscape as well as a space of cultural uses.

João Lucas Domingos



E.1027 – Eileen Gray, O’Neil Ford Monograph 7

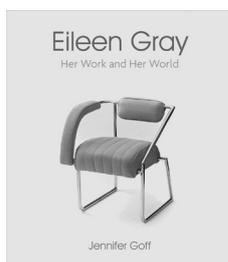
Edited by Wilfried Wang and Peter Adam
 Publisher: Ernst J. Wasmuth publishers
 ISBN: 978-3803008312
 Language: English
 Year: 2017

Even though this book covers only one very small house, the study was carried out with unparalleled profundity. Designed by the artist Eileen Gray as her first architectural work, the holiday house E.1027 was built on the French Mediterranean coast but remained unknown for a long time. Alongside Rietveld’s Schröder house and Mies’ Tugendhat house, it is one of the very rare examples of a total work of art, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* of modernism. However, contrary to these two houses, Eileen Gray created the spatial concept of the house and the garden, as well as the entire furniture, alone. So the design is more comprehensive than, for example, the standard furnished houses of Le Corbusier. “E.1027 was a built manifesto”, Wilfried Wang writes, explaining that the building is a response to the Swiss architect, who, ironically, will play a role in the history of the house, but a rather inglorious one.

The book begins with two essays by Peter Adam, who personally knew Gray. On the basis of conversation reminiscences and manuscripts, he introduces her thoughts and design concepts while also describing their friendship. In the second text, he analyzes her connection to Le Corbusier and her then life partner, Jean Badovici, whom she calls co-architect of the house, although he was only involved in a few elements of the detailing. Le Corbusier admired the building with envy, or so the book argues, noting he attacked the architecture with numerous murals and by building and living next to it – much to Gray’s annoyance. In further essays, Rosamund Diamond writes about the artistic context in which the house was built, Silvia Beretta on garden design, Wilfried Wang on Gray’s architectural design methodology, Izabella Z. Dennis on color design, and Rachel Stella on the history of the house’s use.

The building is comprehensively documented in this monograph with photos that Eileen Gray took of the house, plans from archives, newly drawn technical drawings, as well as recent photos, but especially with numerous reconstructions of lost furniture pieces, which together form a creative unity. This research goes beyond previous architectural monographs, because over the years Wilfried Wang and students of the University of Texas at Austin have reconstructed the interior of E.1027 down to the last detail. Their work shows that the actual reconstruction done of the building's interior cannot yet be considered complete.

Carsten Krohn



Eileen Gray: her work and her world

Author: Jennifer Goff
 Publisher: Irish Academic Press
 ISBN: 978-0716532767
 Language: English
 Year: 2015

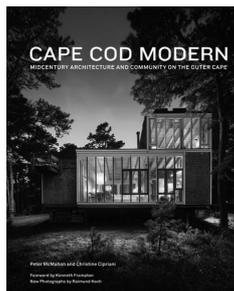
Eileen Gray: her work and her world is a shrewdly illustrated, comprehensive study on the life and artistic production of the French-based Irish designer and architect. A serious attempt to rectify and demystify Eileen Gray's history and to contribute to her due inclusion in the Modern canon. Approaching her lack of recognition and "rediscovery" in the late 1960's, Jennifer Goff addresses the condition of female artists in the 20th century and provides considerations about attribution matters, especially concerning Gray's architectural designs, namely the E.1027 house and the issues involving Jean Badovici and Le Corbusier.

Based on her PhD research, Goff explores Gray's private archives and library alongside her work and remaining correspondence with friends and acquaintances, creating a web of connections from the people she knew, to the books she read and the many artistic avant-garde movements she was aware of, linking them with specific aspects of her design and philosophy. This analysis, as it comprehends a great range of influences and an extensive scope of her output, allows Goff to decipher some of Gray's "coded symbols" and to demonstrate how some of her design

elements reappear in different pieces on the various media she used.

Each chapter is dedicated to a particular subject of her biography and professional activity, but all provide some broader context, so they can be read separately. Throughout the book, one can grasp a deeper understanding of Gray's personality, adding to her known withdrawal and perfectionism some vulnerability, wit and sense of Irish self-identification, although the book's emphasis seems to be — understandably — on her career.

Pedro Sambrano



Cape Cod Modern: Midcentury Architecture and Community on the Outer Cape

Author: Peter McMahon, Christine Cipriani
 Publisher: Metropolis Book
 ISBN: 978-1-935202-16-5
 Language: English
 Year: 2014

The publication *Cape Cod Modern: Midcentury Architecture and Community on the Outer Cape* is organized in four chapters which evolve accordingly with the phases of building in the Outer Cape (United States) between 1938 and 1977.

The Foreword is signed by Kenneth Frampton, which characterizes the publication as a "...painstakingly researched and beautifully written study...", in which/where it is possible, through its 270 pages, to find more than 250 photographs (70 by Raimund Koch) and several technical drawings (by Thomas Dalmas) of the site. The authors, Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani, present us the communion between the traditions of Cape Cod fishing towns and Bauhaus concepts (together with postwar experimentation), resulting in the regional modernism buildings sample that is Cape Cod.

Cape Cod Modern is a journey through four decades, keeping pace with the discoveries and interpretations of architects, artists, scientists, politics and writers in a land destined to disappear. Here is possible to understand a fragile subset of modern architecture in America, where about 100 houses were planned for

an incognito future, in an economical way and, until recently, silent in the history of architecture.

Silvio Alves



Holidays after the Fall: seaside architecture and urbanism in Bulgaria and Croatia

Edited by Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann and Michael Zinganel
 Publisher: Jovis Verlag GmbH
 ISBN: 978-3-86859-226-9
 Language: English
 Year: 2013

A pleasant survey of the origins and architectural history of mass tourism after WWII in two erstwhile socialist states: Bulgaria and Croatia.

These geographical references help to organize the content of the book which begins with an insightful introduction about the origins of mass tourism and the modern concept of living, the authors explore the general prerequisites of mass tourism and the specific conditions for this development in East and West Europe and the arise of an international typology of seaside architecture and urbanism. These architectural typologies are shown and investigated through a rich variety of case studies that end each part of the book.

It is important to point out the photography series that opens and closes the publication which shows, at the beginning, a vibrant holiday scenario on the Croatian Adriatic in the early 1970s and, at the end, the photo series "Holidays after the fall" (2012), taken for this publication, that presents the low-season air of desertion on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

This publication goes from the initial optimism about the construction and promotion of modern leisure architecture having remarkable quality and diversity, passing through important political changes and privatization of business, to how these buildings have been economically and physically restructured.

Carolina Chaves