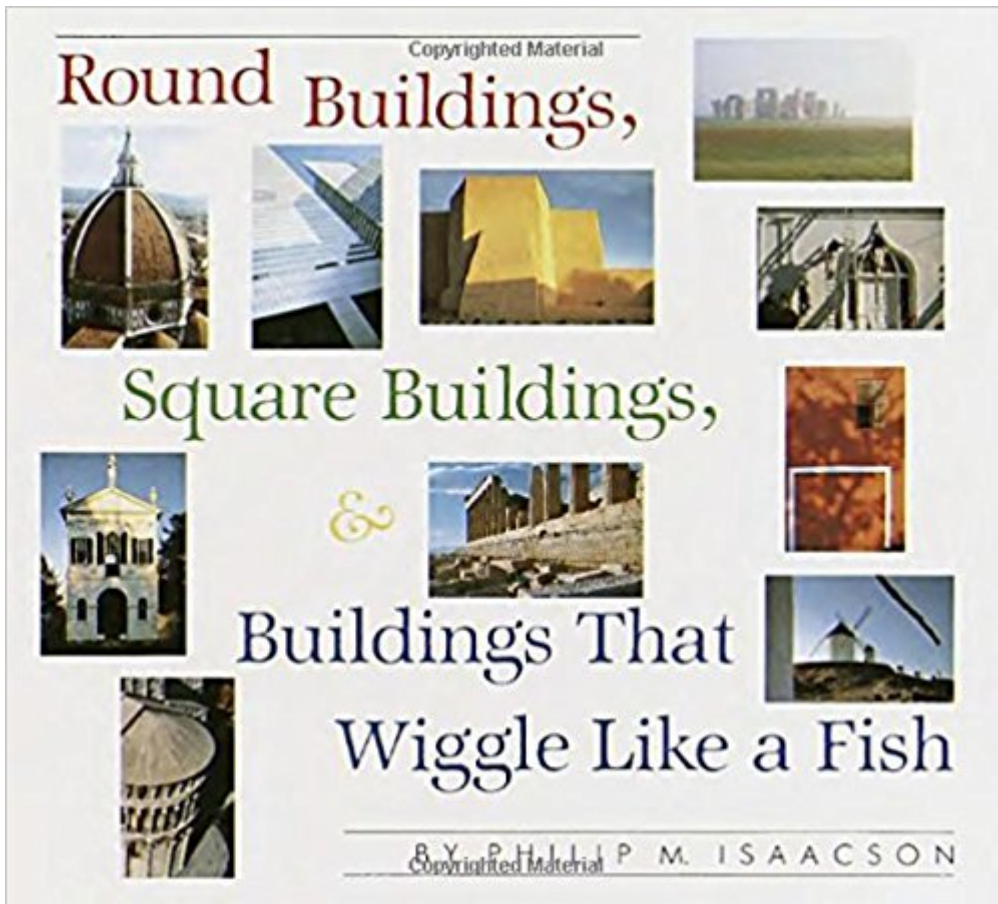


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Round Buildings, Square Buildings, And Buildings That Wiggle Like A Fish



Synopsis

What do we see when we look at a building? From the classical Parthenon in Greece to the simple fisherman's shacks in New England to the post-modernist Pompidou Center in France, Philip Isaacson explores what gives buildings their character. From the materials, form, color, ornamentation, placement in the landscape and the way the light strikes them, there are so many elements that contribute to shaping architecture into art. This is a perfect introduction to the complexities and wonders of architecture for children and adults. "This wonderful book will change the way you see buildings forever." —New York Newsday "The photographs are marvelous and the text clear and interesting." —The New Yorker "Isaacson's book could be the beginning of a lifelong love of architecture." —The Chicago Tribune A Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book: Nonfiction, a Notable 1988 Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies, and winner of the Scientific American Young Readers Award

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Clear, stunning photographs combine with a sincere, well-meaning text to lead readers on a tour of places that seem close to the author's heart, if not his sensibilities. Included are the wonders of Alhambra, the Taj Mahal and the Parthenon, and such unlikely but apt entries as New England shelters. In the chapters on doorways, ceilings, structure, etc., simple concepts and more complicated ones sit side by side and require some explanation. For example, to say that one

building has more dignity than others without offering firm background on the criteria for judging architectural "dignity" renders the comparison meaningless. So is the statement that "Order and loveliness at York (Minster) have equal voices," since few readers will understand "voice" in this context. And the sentence structure can be confusing; the "This is" that begins many statements sets readers adrift for a few words until the picture is directly referred to. When the text works, the images are exceptional: Trinity Church next to the John Hancock tower in Boston "slumbers on like an old monk gathered up in his robes." Because of such references, and despite its flaws, the volume is certain to impress readers, and open their eyes to the architectural wealth around them each day. Ages 10-up. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 4-7 This obtuse collection of photographs takes readers on a tour of major and minor buildings around the world. In the accompanying text Isaacson discusses the elements that give a building its character and attempts to explain how the harmony of these elements makes a structure beautiful. Unfortunately, the organization of the book is so fragmented, jumping from place to place, backwards and forwards through time, that the result is more a travelogue than a survey of architectural styles. After looking at the Taj Mahal, the Parthenon, and Chartres, Isaacson examines building materials, windows, doors, roofs, and ornamentation. Some points are belabored, while others are not clearly defined, and the ``gee-whiz'' tone quickly becomes annoying. The 93 color photographs are mostly of high quality, and each is numbered for reference within the text. Because each building generally is allotted only one photograph, even when a different element is being discussed, readers are frequently required to turn back to a previous picture. An appended list of the photographs purports to offer additional information about the buildings and structures discussed but, for the most part, simply repeats information previously given. The lack of a bibliography, a glossary, and an index limits the book's usefulness. Jeanette Larson, Mesquite Public Library, Tex. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Round Buildings, Square Buildings, Buildings That Wiggle Like A Fish won't fit into the curriculums of many schools but its appearance in 1988 earned it high recommendation as a basic introduction for all ages, to the world of architecture. This reprint of Round Buildings, Square Buildings, Buildings That Wiggle Like A Fish invites new generations to take a different look at the buildings we use. Beautiful photos abound.

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