



The Function of Ornament: Second Printing

By Farshid Moussavi

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Architecture needs mechanisms that allow it to become connected to culture. It achieves this by continually capturing the forces that shape society as material to work with. Architecture's materiality is therefore a composite one, made up of visible forces (structural, functional, physical) as well as invisible forces (cultural, political, temporal). Architecture progresses through new concepts that connect with these forces, manifesting itself in new aesthetic compositions and affects. Ornament is the by-product of this process, through which architectural material is organized to transmit unique affects.

This book is a graphic guide to ornaments in the twentieth century. It unveils the function of ornament as the agent for specific affects, dismantling the idea that ornament is applied to buildings as a discrete or non-essential entity. Each case operates through greater or lesser depth to exploit specific synergies between the exterior and the interior, constructing an internal order between ornament and material. These internal orders produce expressions that are contemporary, yet whose affects are resilient in time.

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The Function of Ornament: Second Printing By Farshid Moussavi Bibliography

- Rank: #729115 in Books
- Color: Satin Black
- Brand: Clone & Predator
- Published on: 2017-09-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .0" h x .0" w x .0" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 192 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

This book represents a return to architectural research as drawing. If it's a harbinger for 2007, I'm excited to see what else Actar and whoever else dares to draw can come up with. --Archinect

The Function of Ornament is a primer for the digital age, with Foreign Office Architects Farshid Moussavi demonstrating how the computer is as fine a form generator as any pattern book. --Wallpaper Magazine

-- A remarkable array of forms. --Metropolis Magazine

Undeniably powerful. -- Architect's Journal

A compelling study of affect manifest in clearly presented case studies with savy representations of various architectural techniques. --Documents

A thoroughly and beautifully illustrated book that gives a broad overview of the various affects achieved by mostly contemporary buildings. --Archidose

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The impressive array of diagrams are extremely clear and useful... If you are looking for component and systems analysis of projects such as Future Systems' amorphous Selfridges Department Store or Herzog and de Meuron's embossed copper skin at the De Young Museum; look no further. --Death By Architecture

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About the Author

Farshid Moussavi is an internationally acclaimed architect and Professor in Practice of Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design. She was previously co-founder of the London-based Foreign Office Architects (FOA). Moussavi has completed her first U.S. commission, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland (2012), its installation at the 13th Architecture Biennale in Venice (2012), and The Victoria Beckham Flagship Store in London (2014), and she is currently working on a wide range of prestigious international projects including residential complexes in the La Défense district of Paris and in Montpellier, as well as a department store in Paris, France; and an office complex in the City of London, UK.

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