



Architecture on the Carpet: The Curious Tale of Construction Toys and the Genesis of Modern Buildings

Brenda Vale, Robert Vale

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An intriguing and nostalgic exploration of the relationships between children's building sets and developments in modern architecture

This entertaining book offers a novel view of architecture through the prism of construction toys. Ranging over the last century to the present, Brenda and Robert Vale draw parallels between the model-building sets of the modern period and architectural movements, social history, and national identities and myths. Some children's construction toys such as Lincoln Logs and Tudor Minibrix have looked to the past. Others have looked to the future: as early as the 1920s, the American metal toy Bilt-E-Z could be used to construct a stepped-back skyscraper like the Empire State Building.

The Vales investigate not only how models sets have reflected different building styles but also whether the toys themselves influenced the careers of the children who grew up playing with them. They explore connections between model-railway buildings and modernism; model sets such as Castos and reinforced concrete housing; and even between the creative but slightly surreal Playplax and postmodern deconstructivist architecture. 111 illustrations, 97 in color

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