A diverse, critically acclaimed collection of documentaries that illuminate the work and theories of

TADAO ANDO + Jan Rutgers, Ernst May & Many Others

Films, Videos and DVDs on the History and Practice of Architecture

MIES VAN DER ROHE + SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

REM KOOLHAAS

TADAO ANDO + SVERRE FEHN

ALL Titles Now on DVD!

FIRST RUN / ICARUS FILMS
KOCHUU is a visually stunning film about modern Japanese architecture, its roots in Japanese culture, and its interplay with the Nordic building tradition. Winding its way through visions of the future and traditional concepts, nature and concrete, gardens and high-tech spaces, the film explains how contemporary Japanese architects strive to unite the ways of modern man with the old philosophies in astounding constructions.

KOCHUU, which translates as “in the jar,” refers to the Japanese tradition of constructing small, enclosed physical spaces. The film illustrates key components of traditional Japanese architecture, such as reducing the distinction between outdoors and indoors, disrupting the symmetrical, building with posts rather than with walls, modular construction techniques, and its symbiotic relationship with water, light and nature.

The film illustrates these concepts through remarkable views of, among dozens of other buildings and gardens, the Imperial Katsura Palace, the Todai-Ji Temple, the Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum, the Sony Tower, numerous teahouses and gardens as well as examples of the cross-fertilization evidenced in buildings throughout Scandinavia, and shows how ‘invisible’ Japanese traditions are evident even in modern, high-tech buildings.

KOCHUU also introduces Japan’s leading architects as well as Scandinavian contemporaries—including Pritzker Prize winners Tadao Ando and Sverre Fehn—to form a compelling illustration of how the aesthetics of Japanese architecture and design are expressed through simple means, and also shows that the best architecture expresses spiritual qualities that enrich human life.

Architects Featured in Kochuu

> **Tadao Ando** – Pritzker Prize Winner. Self-taught, ex-boxer known for his beautiful concrete architecture. Recently exposed for his Modern Art Museum Fort Worth in USA and Giorgio Armani’s exhibition-theatre in Milan.

> **Sverre Fehn** – Pritzker Prize winning, internationally renowned Norwegian architect known to confront traditionalism in Norwegian architecture.

> **Kristian Gullichsen** – One of Finland’s most highly acclaimed architects working in the spirit of Alvar Aalto. His new Finnish Embassy in Stockholm has recently brought him attention.

> **Kisho Kurokawa** – Recognized for his science-fiction like capsule-high-rise buildings from the early 1970’s. Distinguished author of several books on modern Japanese architecture.

> **Toyo Ito** – Japanese Architect whose buildings often are the result of ideas concerning how man has changed due to modern technology. Primarily known for his transparent buildings with computer controlled elements.
> **Juhani Pallasmaa** – Distinguished Finnish architect and author of several books on architectural theory and Japanese influences in Scandinavian architecture.

> **Kazuo Shinohara** – Modernist pioneer and the eldest among the Japanese architects. Unique for his background in both mathematics and traditional Japanese architecture.

“A gentle, beautiful film. Elite architects… speak without intervention from an interviewers or narrator.”—The Age

“Unhurried and often beautiful. It draws the watcher in.”—The Australian

**Architects Prize, 2004 International Film Festival of Docs on Architecture**

**2004 International Festival of Films on Art**

**2005 Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia Conference**


53 minutes | color | 2003
In 1967, at the end of a career spanning more than six decades, which included the design of the Seagram Building in New York, the Lake Shore Drive Apartment Buildings in Chicago, and the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, architect Mies van der Rohe (1886 - 1969) designed a simple gas station near Montreal. The story of that gas station serves as the point of departure for REGULAR OR SUPER, which examines Mies’ entire body of work (more than 70 buildings) and a sparse style that reflects his motto that “less is more.”

Mies began his architectural career in Germany early in the 20th century and during the Thirties taught at the famed Bauhaus School of Art and Design in Berlin. In 1938, after the school was shut down by the Nazis, Mies emigrated to Chicago where he designed 22 buildings for the Illinois Institute of Technology. Over the next three decades, in a radical break from the predominant beaux arts style, he refined a distinctive, modernist architectural style emphasizing glass and steel in a variety of buildings whose structures creatively integrated surrounding public space.
Featuring stylish cinematography and an evocative jazz score, REGULAR OR SUPER illustrates many of Mies’ classic buildings, combining these striking facades with observations from some architecture superstars, including Rem Koolhaas, Elizabeth Diller and Phyllis Lambert, which are interlaced with anecdotes from customers and neighbors of the gas station, plus comments from his biographer and family members.

REGULAR OR SUPER is a fascinating and informative introduction to the work of one of the 20th century’s most influential architects and a thought-provoking demonstration of the social and artistic contributions that architecture at its best can make to our urban environments.

“Critic’s Choice!”—Chicago Tribune

“★★★★[4 out of 4 stars!] Should be seen immediately by anyone with an interest in architecture.”—The Gazette

“A unique cinematic examination of Mies.”
—Inland Architecture Magazine

“Quite interesting… Insightful.”
—Ballast Quarterly Reviews

“An interesting film with a great subject. Well-filmed, well-spoken.”
—Michael Wilmington, Chicago Metromix

“Recommended! Stylish!”
—Educational Media Reviews Online

“A fitting tribute to the legendary architect of the 20th century.”—Le Devoir

Best Photography, 2005
Rome Documentary Festival

2005 Chicago International
Documentary Festival

Best Canadian Film, 2004
International Festival of Films on Art

57 minutes | color | 2004

DVD BONUS FEATURES

> 14 Extra Scenes (59 min) with Rem Koolhaas
Georges Danforth, Joseph Fujikawa,
Stanley Tigerman, Dirk Lohan, Phyllis Lambert,
Gene Summers, Detlef Mertins, Ben
Nicholson, Elizabeth Diller, Charles Renfro,
Iñigo Manglano & Margit Kleber

> English & French Versions

(note: DVD is not Closed Captioned)
Widely recognized as the greatest living designer of transportation structures like airports and train stations, award-winning, world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava came to international prominence at an early stage in his career. His popular yet controversial creations can now be found all over the globe, and his stunning proposal recently won the commission for the new transportation hub at the rebuilt World Trade Center in New York City.

Accompanying Calatrava to various work sites we begin to understand the problems someone in his position encounters (dealing with clients in person and on the phone), and come to know him during his hectic work schedule. In unexpected quiet moments (on an airplane, in a hotel lobby, sitting at a bar) he paints or draws, dedicating the rare moments of serenity to his work as well.

We visit construction sites, railway stations, bridges, concert halls, airports… Through the images and sounds of the documentary, space, function, form and atmosphere are conveyed. The forms are extraordinary: dynamic, frozen movements. In these forms SANTIAGO CALATRAVA’S TRAVELS searches for a visual framework of remembrance, opening the door to Calatrava’s associations or references in architectural and art history.

The result is a tour of his oeuvre and an encounter with extraordinary shapes; dynamic equipoise, forms that hearken to waves, trees, wind, rock, wings: the natural world.
“A splendid film! Breathtaking! The photography enhances the dynamic yet graceful form of Calatrava’s structures. Wonderfully informative… essential viewing for all architectural and building construction students.”—Leonardo: The Journal of the International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology

“With rare effectiveness, the film makes actual characters of the typical frustrations and rewards that come with the profession of architecture. We are also treated to well articulated and illustrated conversations with the artist that enable us to understand his creative thought process and to arrive at a clear comprehension of his work.”—Ballast Quarterly Reviews

“An exquisite, beautifully photographed insight [and] fascinating visual delight.”—Neue Zurcher Zeitung (Switzerland)

“Recommended! Makes accessible a timeless art in the hands of a modern master.”—Educational Media Reviews Online

77 minutes | color | 1999
From the Modernist ideas of Europe and North America, through the eccentricity of Postmodernism, and to the importance of climate and place, this 3-part series from Australia is an investigation into the eclectic world of architects and their creations.

Featuring buildings that are striking, controversial or simply beautiful, and concentrating on the views and motivations of award-winning architects, including Harry Seidler, Richard Leplastrier, Paul Katsieris, Peter Corrigan, Bernard Seeber, Phillip Cox, Sean Godsell and many others, IN THE MIND OF THE ARCHITECT explores connections between architecture and the human condition, and discusses the brutal politics of building structures.

> **Part 1, KEEPING THE FAITH** explores the relationship between architect and client, including projects where the designer is the client. Looking at houses they design for themselves, for government and for big business, Part 1 also examines the fight between those who prefer innovation, and those who want ‘nice’, conservative buildings. Is it the architect’s responsibility to give us what we want or to lead us where we haven’t been before?

> **Part 2, THE PUBLIC GOOD:** With capital on the move from public to private spending, architects must straddle both worlds and balance the desires of business clients with the obligation to the public good. Cities are the battleground, driven by pressure for commercial development. So who makes the decision? Who cares about the public good with respect to large commercial developments? THE PUBLIC GOOD looks at these and other issues surrounding public development.

> **Part 3, CORRUGATED DREAMS:** The potential of architecture is to enable things to happen—to enhance, not restrict. What gives an architect the confidence to build a great building? Is it a good site, tolerant neighbors, or a gifted contractor? Or is the most important factor a brave client with lots of money? From seemingly hopeless suburbs to a downtown hotel, CORRUGATED DREAMS visits the artistic possibilities of architecture, within the practical context of the 21st century consumer’s needs.

Ultimately IN THE MIND OF THE ARCHITECT explains the process we call architecture—its philosophy and its essential relationship with people.
“Wonderfully interesting. Rich and diverse…thee issues discussed are applicable not just to architecture, but to any profession that involves creative problem solving, the balance of form and function, and revisions brought on by social needs.” —Ballast Quarterly Review

“A masterful job of explaining architectural concepts [and] a very stylish production.” —The Age

“Fascinating! Beautifully presented, photographed and argued.” —The Mercury

Best Documentary, 2000
Victorian Architecture Awards

The Bates Smart Award for Architecture in the Media (2000)

Silver Medal, 2000 Australian Cinematography Society Awards

3 x 55 minutes | color | 2000
Lagos’ population is expected to reach 24 million people by 2020, which would make it the third largest city in the world. Every hour, 21 new inhabitants set out to start a life in the city, a life that is highly unpredictable and requires risk taking, networking and improvisation as essential strategies for survival.

Rem Koolhaas—winner of architecture’s Nobel, the Pritzker Architecture Prize—is a Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at Harvard. For the past four years Koolhaas and students from The Harvard Project on the City have come to Lagos regularly to research the type of urban environment that is produced by explosive population growth. The Project on the City is framed by two concepts: academia’s bewilderment with new forms of accelerated urbanization in developing regions and the maelstrom of redevelopment in existing urban areas; and, second, the failure of the design professions to adequately cope with these changes.

LAGOS / KOOLHAAS follows Koolhaas during his research in Lagos over a period of two years as he wanders through the city, talking with people and recognizing the problems with water, electricity and traffic. But instead of judging the city to be doomed, he is able to interpret this ‘culture of congestion’ positively, thereby creating a completely new concept of the big city.

For example, in most North American cities we grumble about the traffic and turn up the CD. In Lagos, traffic jams are such an overwhelming feature of the city that they have become a key marketplace. When the cars stop, the trading begins. Or, as Koolhaas’s report puts it, “the ubiquitous traffic jam: lulled in congestion, captive to the road’s breadth, and thriving with entrepreneurial activity.”

For Koolhaas, the key to understanding a city such as Lagos is the realization that it is not the controllable result of Western planning. The city should be seen as an anarchic
organism in which the enterprise of the inhabitants turns any apparent disadvantage into an advantage: “Anguish over the city’s shortcomings in traditional urban systems obscures the reasons for the continued, exuberant existence of Lagos and other megacities like it. These shortcomings have generated ingenious, critical alternative systems.”

Thus, for Koolhaas and his team, “Lagos is not catching up with us. Rather, we may be catching up with Lagos…”

“Highly Recommended! Excellent! Easy to view and understand. Rem Koolhaas has done it again.”
—Educational Media Reviews Online

“Compelling!”—ArchitectureMedia.com

2004 African Studies Association Film Festival
2003 Architects Series, Museum of Modern Art (New York)
2003 Marseille International Documentary Film Festival
2003 International Environmental Film Festival

55 minutes | color | 2002
After the Revolution the abundant resources on the desolate Russian steppes became crucial in the Communist plan for a new utopia. Huge cities had to be built to house hundreds of thousands of workers, but Soviet architects could not design such cities: the old guard was politically suspect while young designers fantasized about flying cities. So, in the late 1920s and early 30s, well-known Western architects were invited to create the workers’ paradises.

SOTSGOROD tells this unknown story in the architects’ own words. Some of the last survivors are interviewed: Jan Rutgers (of the Autonomous International Colony Kuzbass), Magarete Schutte-Lihotzky (of the Ernst May group, famous for the super efficient kitchen), and Philipp Tolziner (“Bauhaus Brigade”). Those who have passed away speak through their letters and lectures, including Hannes Meyer, Hans Schmidt and Ernst May. Some believed they were making an essential

MAGNITOGORSK is about the fortunes of three generations living in the shadow of Russia’s most breathtaking industrial project of the Thirties: The designing and building of vast, new industrial cities on the then bare steppes.

Early in the Thirties, the steppes of the Urals were transformed at breakneck speed into a blast-furnace complex, and a city was raised out of the ground—Magnitogorsk. MAGNITOGORSK goes in search of the past and current ideals of the designers, builders and residents.
contribution to the workers’ struggle; others were seizing an unheard of opportunity to apply their design philosophies and spatial theories to entire cities.

SOTSGOROD also visits four of the cities—Magnitogorsk, Orsk, Novokuznetsk and Kemerov—which are judged by following a resident in each city as he goes to work, shops, eats dinner. By looking at the quality of day-to-day lives, the film measures the success of the once robust ideals of the architects.

“Fascinating! A valuable historical document [and] probing, eye opener of a documentary.”
—Archis

“The reminiscences [of the architects] are interwoven to good effect with archival footage from the 1920s and early 1930s that both provides a visual context and helps to convey something of the chaotic, and sometime even inspirational, spirit of time and place.”—Slavic Review

1995 Amsterdam International Documentary Festival
1995 International Festival of Films on Art

92 minutes | color | 1995
Mille Gilles
Architects Greg Lynn and Lars Spuybroek (with other creative people) explain and show how the anti-hierarchical philosophies of Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) affect their work.

“Informed, clear and intellectually generous... A valiant attempt to break habitual ways of thinking.”—Leonardo Digital Reviews
44 minutes | color | 1997

The Discreet Charm of Bucharest
Architecture in Bucharest, where small buildings and shady courtyards are dwarfed by grim Stalinist complexes built during Ceausescu’s reign. With the help of 99-year-old architect Iulan Namescu, we learn about the significance buildings have in one’s life.

40 minutes | color | 1998

Japan Dreaming
A remarkable journey through Japan’s changing technological landscape, including visits to the “new age” cities, silent levitating trains, and computerized buildings which self-clean.

★★★★! Highly Recommended! A universally appealing look at Japan’s interpretation of the future.”—Video Rating Guide for Libraries
58 minutes | color | 1991

From Courtyard House to Block Apartment
Examines rapid industrialization in China, and the impact on traditional housing.

“With an excellent eye for detail [it] contrasts traditional houses with modern urban apartments.”—Choice
23 minutes | color | 1987

Living With The Past
Cairo is one of the few medieval cities in the world that remains relatively intact. This film documents a unique approach to historic preservation, one that combines social and economic development with monument restoration.

“Recommended! Interviews with architects, construction workers, and development officials…illustrate how the vitality of the neighborhood is being preserved.”—Library Journal
56 minutes | color | 2001
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