

CHICAGO ARCHITECT

OUT OF SITE

WHERE DOES SCB'S TOWER TOUCH GROUND?

Plus
Stimulating Jobs
Taliesin at 100

ALSO INSIDE: CHILL OUT, CAROL 9 CARBON CHOPPER 10 LAWYERS' LUNCH LOUNGE 23

AIA Chicago

may | jun 2011

FESTIVAL OF THE
ARCHITECTURE
BOOK, 1511-2011

Pages for the Ages, Chapter 2

More architects' favorite books

As part of the Festival of the Architecture Book, 1511-2011, Chicago Architect is asking local practitioners to identify the two or three architecture books that have most influenced them.



Robin Randall, AIA
Senior Associate, FGM Architects

Architecture: Form, Space, and Order

by Francis D.K. Ching
Published by Wiley originally in 1979 - Third Edition released in 2007
At Ball State University, College of Architecture and Planning, this was my favorite text for design and drawing classes. Ching's meticulous illustrations clarify simple planning and design principles and always take me back to the basics. I've used it several times during design dialogues to argue that there are many ways to look at a problem. It always offers great perspective—and inspires me to drop the mouse and keep a pencil in my hand.

Modern Architecture in Europe: A Guide to Buildings Since the Industrial Revolution

by Dennis J. De Witt & Elizabeth R. De Witt
Published by E.P. Dutton in 1987
This book was a gift from Ralph Johnson in 1989 when I was leaving Perkins+Will to embark on a Fulbright Scholarship to Denmark. He insisted it was the best guide to seeing great architecture during my travels, and it continues to be. One of my mythical aspirations is to visit all the projects listed someday. I've only made a small dent so far!

The Art Spirit by Robert Henri, originally published in 1923

by J. B. Lippincott Company
My copy was reprinted in 1984 and is falling apart.
I stumbled on this book in an old bookstore in New Harmony, Ind., the day before my wedding in 1991. Robert Henri was an American artist and teacher and wrote this book for anyone who loses sight of the act of creating something as important. I have given this book as a gift to young architects who have become disillusioned with the profession. It energizes the spirit—it's about trusting your instincts and expressing your individuality.

Sun, Wind & Light; Architectural Design Strategies

by G.Z. Brown and Mark DeKay
published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Second Edition published in 2000
This is still the best book I've found on environmentally responsible architecture. The principles of orientation, solar, wind, passive techniques are clearly described with great hand-drawn illustrations with no mention of USGBC or LEED! Let me know if you know of a better resource—I am still searching.

To submit yours for a future issue, send a list of no more than three books to dennis@rodkin.com. Include each book's full title, author, publisher and year of publication; and your brief explanation of the book's role in your architectural thinking. Also include a high-resolution photo of yourself. (Not all lists can be published; we will use as many as we have the space to accommodate.)

For more on the Festival, go to www.1511-2011.org.



Stuart Cohen, FAIA
Principal, Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects
Professor of Architecture Emeritus, University of Illinois Chicago

Le Corbusier et Pierre Jeanneret: Oeuvre Complete 1910-29 Zurich, Editions Girsberger

This book best presents Le Corbusier's conception of a building as a membrane of surface stretched over complex horizontally and vertically interlocking spaces. I fell in love with Corbu's thumbnail perspective sketches in which the field of view is widened and flattened to show an almost 180-degree view of the interior spaces he envisioned.

Houses and Gardens by E. L. Lutyens

by Lawrence Weaver London
Country Life, 1925
This book presents Lutyens' ingenious floor plans and details that seem almost Michelangelo-esque, in reinventing the language of traditional architecture. Lutyens' residential work suggested to me that it is possible to be modern without the use of abstract forms.

Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright

Berlin, Wasmuth, 1910, reprinted by Rizzoli, New York, 1986
Wright's drawings stand with the great 18th and 19th century books of architectural engravings (Letarouilly, Schinkel, Garnier's Paris Opera House) as among the most beautiful illustrations of buildings ever produced. For me these drawings show the total integration of cabinets and interior trim into the defining elements of Wright's spaces, as well as suggesting reciprocity of design ideas between interior and exterior building surfaces. I love the figure-ground reversals that are used in the borders of Wright's perspective drawings.