Aesthetic Theory: Essential Texts for Architecture and Design

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A collection of pivotal ideas about beauty from throughout history, with an introduction and critical headnotes.

This collection of writings on beauty includes selections from twenty key philosophers and theoreticians spanning two millennia:

Plato • Aristotle • Vitruvius • Alberti • Kant • Burke • Fiedler • Nietzsche • Wilde • Bergson • Bell • Scott • Benjamin • Bataille • Sontag • Jameson • Scarry • Nehamas • Zangwill • Freedberg and Gallese

With an introduction and critical headnotes explaining the importance of each text, Mark Foster Gage offers a framework for a provocative history of ideas about beauty as they relate to contemporary thinking on architecture and design. In a world increasingly defined by sumptuous visuality, the concepts of beauty and visual sensation are not mere intellectual exercises but standards that define the very nature of design practice across disciplines and that are essential to the emerging worlds of design and architecture in the twenty-first century.

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