



The Most Beautiful House in the World

By Witold Rybczynski

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"A winning book, a pleasure to read...a revelation about what architects actually do and how they go about doing it." *—Los Angeles Times*

Witold Rybczynski takes us on an extraordinary odyssey as he tells the story of designing and building of his own house. Rybczynski's project began as a workshop; through a series of "happy accidents," however, the structure gradually evolved into a full-fledge house.

In tracing this evolution, he touches on matters both theoretical and practical, writing on such diverse topics as the distinguished structural descendants of the humble barn, the ritualistic origins of the elements of classical architecture, and the connections between dress and habitation, and between architecture and gastronomy. Rybczynski discusses feng shui, the Chinese art of placing a home in the landscape, and also considers the theories and work of such architects as Palladio, Le Corbusier, and Frank Lloyd Wright. An eloquent examination of the links between being and building, *The Most Beautiful House in the World* offers insights into the joys of "installing ourselves in a place, of establishing a spot where it be safe to dream."

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Rybczynski here describes the act of designing and building a house, questioning the nature of architecture and the architect's role. "This delightful ramble through the creative process will beguile architecture buffs and general readers alike," remarked PW. Illustrated. 75,000 first printing.

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From Library Journal

Young architect decides to build boat, needs boat house to work in, ends up years later with country place and no boat, and meditates thereon. An extended reflection on the meaning of a house to its inhabitants, this personalized extension of the author's earlier *Home* (LJ 9/1/86) does reveal some of what an architect does, albeit when the same person is architect, client, and builder, and it is simply written. More revealing, more detailed, more particular, and preferred is Tracy Kidder's *House* (LJ 8/85).

- *Jack Perry Brown, Ryerson & Burnham Lib., Art Inst. of Chicago*

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About the Author

Witold Rybczynski of Polish parentage, was born in Edinburgh in 1943, raised in Surrey, and attended Jesuit schools in England and Canada. He received Bachelor of Architecture (1960) and Master of Architecture (1972) degrees from McGill University in Montreal. He is the author of more than fifty articles and papers on the subject of housing, architecture, and technology, including the books **Taming the Tiger, Paper Heroes, The Most Beautiful House in the World, Waiting for the Weekend, and Looking Around: A Journey Through Architecture** (all available in Penguin), and most recently, **City Life**. He lives with his wife, Shirley Hallam, in Philadelphia and is the Martin and Margy Myerson Professor of Urbanism at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Donna Miller:

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