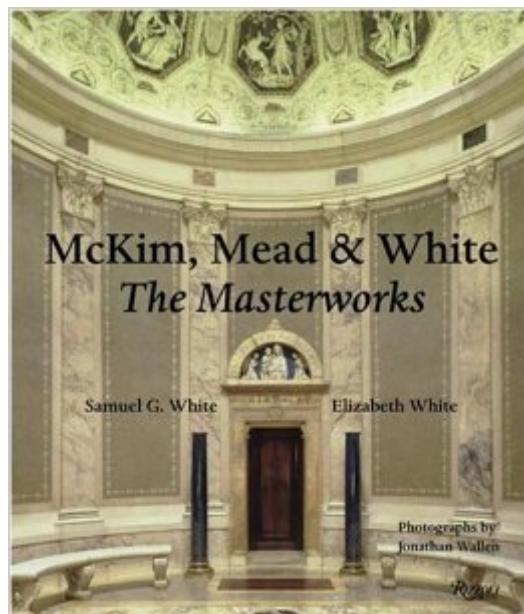


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McKim, Mead & White: The Masterworks



Synopsis

The Boston Public Library, Madison Square Garden, Washington Memorial Arch, the campuses of Columbia and Harvard, and the Century, Harvard, Metropolitan, and University clubs in New York are among the creations of McKim, Mead & White. This illustrious American firm flourished in the period 1879-1915

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had been panting over this book when I first learned of it's release and it was given to me as a gift, quite unexpected, considering it's costly list price. 1) Just because you are related to Mr. White does not mean you have the same gifts. Where architect White was a gifted visionary, builder and man about town, (not to mention murdered lover of Evelyn Nesbitt) author White is pedestrian at best and swinging from gilded-age coat tails at worst. 2) Some of the photography is excellent, and that is the reason this book still lives on my coffee table. However, I will warn you that much of it is flat and lacking in imagination. 3) For lovers of architecture like myself and others who would want to own this book, it is amazingly short of drawings such as elevations and cross-sections. To see these buildings on paper and then in lush color photographs would have been a better exercise than the travelogue style presentation in this volume. In short, the book does have some lovely parts, but the whole is a bit disappointing. I don't know that I would pay retail for it, rather I'd look for a good used version, or ask Santa for it for Christmas.

Though the definitive book on these great architects work is still yet to be written, this book certainly

does their work justice. I enjoyed the text and felt quite knowledged after reading it. I thought the pictures where bold and well selected, though not to the level of some books of this sort. I especially enjoyed the section on Penn Station, wow, what a building, it is so disheartening that it was leveled for a very mediocre building that may find itself meeting the same fate as Penn Station soon: poetic justice I suppose. I think instead of converting McKim, Mead, and White's Post Office Building into the new Penn Station, they should take the blue prints of the original and build it, this was the firms best work, it's a disgrace that is was so underappreciated by the city govenment a the time. At anyrate, if you have any interest in great Gilded Age architecture, you will certainly enjoy this book, just to get a peek inside some of the most exclusive clubs in America is worth the price of the book.

Since the author touts himself as a descendant of Stanford White, one doesn't expect much in the way of critical perspective from the text of this book. More disappointing are the contemporary photographs - although reproduced at enormous size, they are oddly flat and lifeless. For a better book at a better price, check out "The Architecture of McKim, Mead & White in Photographs, Plans and Elevations"

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