



10 Buildings That Changed America

Dan Protes

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10 Buildings that Changed America tells the stories of ten influential works of architecture, the people who imagined them, and the way these landmarks ushered in innovative cultural shifts throughout our society. The book takes readers on a journey across the country and inside these groundbreaking works of art and engineering. The buildings featured are remarkable not only for aesthetic and structural reasons, but also because their creators instilled in them a sense of purpose and personality that became reflected in an overarching sense the American identity.

Edited by the staff of WTTW, the Chicago PBS affiliate that is the most-watched public television station in the country, *10 Buildings* will be released alongside the national broadcast of an hour-long special by the same name. This television event will be promoted over digital media, on-ground events, and educational initiatives in schools, and the book will be a significant component to all of these elements.

10 Buildings retells the shocking, funny, and even sad stories of how these buildings came to be. It offers a peek inside the imaginations of ten daring architects who set out to change the way we live, work, and play. From American architectural stalwarts like Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, to modern revolutionaries like Frank Gehry and Robert Venturi, this book examines the most prominent buildings designed by the most noteworthy architects of our time.

Also profiled are Americans less noted for their architectural acumen, but no less significant for their contributions to the field. Thomas Jefferson, a self-taught architect, is profiled for designing the iconic Virginia State Capitol. Taking its inspiration from ancient Rome, America's first major public building forged a philosophical link between America and the world's earliest democracies. Similarly, Henry Ford employed Albert Kahn to design a state-of-the-art, innovative factory for Ford's groundbreaking assembly line. Reinforced concrete supported massive, open rooms without any interior dividing walls, which yields the uninterrupted space that was essential for Ford's sprawling continuous production setups. What's more, Kahn considered the needs of workers by including astonishingly modern large windows and louvers for fresh air.

The design of each of these ten buildings was completely monumental and prodigious in its time because of the architect's stylistic or functional innovations. Each was also highly influential, inspiring a generation or more of architects, who in turn made a lasting impact on the American landscape. We see the legacy of architects like Mies van der Rohe or H.H. Richardson all around us: in the homes where we live, the offices where we work, our public buildings, and our houses of worship. All have been shaped in one way or another by a handful of imaginative, audacious, and sometimes even arrogant individuals throughout history whose bold ideas have been copied far and wide. *10 Buildings* is the ideal collection to detail the flashes of inspiration from these architects who dared to strike out on their own and design radical new types of buildings that permanently altered our environmental and cultural landscape.

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